PHASE TWO: WILL IT WORK? **DAVID DEITCH**

THE NATION

DECEMBER 27, 1971 50¢ cents

THE WAR NOBODY STOPPED

The Great Powers Wash Their Hands / **V. G. Kiernan**

The Genesis of Resistance / **Rehman Sobhan**

Bangla Desh: From Genocide Toward Statehood

Ved P. Nanda

MICHAEL HARRINGTON on GEORG LUKACS & JACQUES ELLUL

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LETTERS

resistance to evil

Los Angeles, Calif.

DEAR SIRS: "Shot while trying to escape" is the time-honored cliché used by law and order agencies to get rid of the unwanted. . . . Alfred H. Sigman's "A Case for Skepticism" [*The Nation*, Nov. 1] gives support to what many on the West Coast have suspected—that George Jackson was dispatched because of the inspiration he gave others and the unity he was forming among inmates of different skin color and religions behind the bars. . . . "The resistance to evil" time is upon us. It is easy for liberals to resist by supporting the United Prisoners Union, 4718 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. 90029, the Fortune Society in New York City, or other local prison help coalitions that may be mushrooming in your city. *David Seidman*

Cuban holiday

Dallas, Tex.

DEAR SIRS: I was glad to read Richard O'Mara's "Cuba: Policy of Malign Neglect" [*The Nation*, Nov. 22]. Diplomatically we deny its existence, but certain customary relations between countries continue. I was a member of a group sponsored by the Friends World College that spent thirty days touring Cuba by bus in August 1969. We were refused U.S. visas and went to Cuba through Mexico, returning via Madrid.

I sent post cards and printed matter to Dallas with Cuban postage. I had occasion to talk by telephone from Havana to a friend in Dallas. The operator at the Havana Libre (formerly the Hilton) took the Dallas number and put the call through to my room in about twenty minutes. It was like talking to someone in Fort Worth. The charge was $5. The fact that Cuba had nationalized the former U.S. corporation-owned system didn't prevent good service. It's very stupid of our government to refuse to recognize Cuba and encourage trade and normal travel of teachers, professional people and vacationists. . . . *Carl Brannin*

against arson

Mountain Home, Idaho

DEAR SIRS: The Covered Wagon Coffeehouse, in Mountain Home, Idaho, organized by active duty servicemen and women and civilian supporters as part of a G.I. project, was burned to the ground on Sunday, November 21. . . . On Thursday, November 18, a member of the project had been beaten up inside the coffeehouse; on Saturday night, November 20, the premises were illegally entered and the words, "This is just a warning," were painted on the wall.

The Covered Wagon was an old theatre which G.I.s converted . . . into a meeting place for their off-base activities. These include publication of their newspaper, *The Helping Hand*, military counseling on G.I. rights, women's meetings, political education sessions, music groups and work with local people, such as The Idaho Migrants Program. . . .

The active-duty men and women at Mountain Home Air Force Base tell us that their organization is stronger than ever now, due to this incident and their growing awareness of the necessity to organize together for a world free of militarism. We want to help them re-establish a new center. Can you help us by sending a contribution immediately to the Covered Wagon, P.O. Box 729, Mountain Home, Idaho 83647; or, a tax-deductible contribution may be made to the United States Servicemen's Fund, 44 Greenwich Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10011, which has supported the Covered Wagon and similar projects.

Noam Chomsky	Robert Lifton
Faye Dunaway	Arthur Miller
Jane Fonda	Sidney Peck
Dick Gregory	Howard Zinn

EDITORIALS

The Week that Was

The week of December 5th should be remembered as the one in which, with a familiar but suspicious unanimity, the press and the networks managed to imply that President Nixon was virtually a shoo-in for re-election. He had trounced the Democrats in Congress; he was scoring heavily in the field of foreign affairs; supremely active, he was flitting here and there, winning the hearts and minds of the most diverse constituencies. By contrast, this puffery managed to make the Democrats look anemic; they were left, the myth makers assured us, with only one issue—the economy.

Now this scenario may turn out to be prophetic; we have no crystal ball. But the evidence cited by the newsweeklies, the columnists and the commentators, so many of whom seem to have had the same vision at precisely the same time, is not impressive. In fact, different conclusions might well be based on the same evidence:

¶Item: The confirmation of William Rehnquist was at best a dubious victory for the Administration; the Democrats skillfully delayed a vote until they had succeeded in making a strong case, not that the nomination should be rejected but that it should never have been made.

¶Item: The President was indeed in a jolly, self-confident mood when he addressed a 4-H Club rally in Chicago; but the point upon which 2,500 young activists, meeting at Loyola University in the same city, agreed most enthusiastically was that Nixon should be "dumped."

¶Item: That same week, polls indicated that at least 10 million new young voters would register and that these registrations were heavily Democratic.

¶Item: Also that week, Nixon's chances in the farm states were dealt a heavy blow by the Butz appointment, and Arthur Fletcher, the one remaining Negro appointee of any national stature, turned in his resignation, leading to the conclusion that the President has about decided to write off the black vote. At the same time, various ethnic blocs appeared to be distressed by his Peking and Moscow initiatives and the Jewish minority was hardly reassured by the reception accorded the Israeli Prime Minister.

¶Item: Senator McGovern reports—and the polls confirm him—that the war in Vietnam is still very much an issue.

¶Item: Interviews with blue-collar workers in the Pittsburgh area indicate that, while there is some division among them on Phase 2 and who won the Meany-Nixon debate in Miami, they strongly oppose Nixon's re-election.

¶Item: Now that it seems clear that Spiro Agnew will be kept on the ticket, feature stories are beginning to appear which reflect widespread uneasiness about the kind of President he might make.

¶Item: It is clear that the Administration hopes to cut back what is left of the poverty program, and the strong language used by the President to veto a notably progressive child-development bill is in sharp contrast to his previous promises and statements on the same subject.

¶Item: Right-wing conservatives are plotting to caus

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trouble for the President in a few key states, New York included, and Sen. Charles Mathias (R., Md.) expresses the mounting concern among moderate Republicans that hard-line rhetoric and "divisive exploitation" of social problems by the White House are seriously damaging Republican prospects.

Current reports from Cambodia are difficult to reconcile with earlier optimistic forecasts. Vietnamization produces fresh doubts and misgivings. Relations with Canada, our European allies and most of Latin America (Brazil excepted) are less than satisfactory. The Indian-Pakistani conflict dramatically demonstrates the failure of U.S. policy in that area. And so on. Under the circumstances, it is difficult to see just what warrant exists for the confidence with which the mass media assume that the President will walk away with the election. And as the year's end approaches, it is clear that the Democrats will have more than one issue to take to the electorate in 1972.

Top Issue for '72

The illusion that the President is not in any serious political difficulty stems in part from the fact that he holds the initiative and can make the news that the mass media report. But it also stems from the fact that the Democrats, for assignable reasons, are not yet making the case which can and should be made against the President. The Democrats are at the moment preoccupied with the party's deficit, the arrival and departure of candidates (Harris, Bayh and Proxmire have dropped out; Yorty and Jackson have announced; Humphrey is "edging toward" announcement; the fortunes of Lindsay and Kennedy are somewhat uncertain and Muskie is busy front-running). It is understandable, therefore, that the case against Nixon is not being emphasized at this time.

All the same, it is a mistake to permit the illusion of Nixon's electability to become so widespread this far in advance of the actual campaigning. What the Democrats need at the moment is a Public Advocate, someone definitely *not* a candidate, who could begin to draw up the indictment against the President. It takes time to shape issues; themes must be emphasized, elaborated and endlessly repeated before they can be successfully exploited as issues. And time is wasting for the Democrats.

One issue the Democrats should raise is the quality of Richard Nixon's leadership. In our system of government, Presidents have a unique leadership function. What the President says or fails to say can exert enormous influence, if the incumbent understands the importance of this aspect of the office and has the requisite skills. In Theodore Roosevelt's familiar phrase, the Presidency is a "bully pulpit." Apart from advocating one program or opposing another, and explaining why, Presidents should lead on issues which depend more on national attitudes and opinions—and sentiment—than on the enactment or defeat of any particular legislation. The obligation may not be defined in the Constitution, but Presidents have always responded to the obvious need for guidance and direction at the highest level of leadership.

What has been the Nixon record in this indispensable role? What kind of leadership has he provided? When tempers were high on the campuses and there was great

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The Nation is published weekly (except biweekly in July and August) by the Nation Company and copyright 1971 in the U.S.A. by the Nation Associates, Inc., 333 Sixth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10014. Tel: CH 2-8400. Second class postage paid at New York, N. Y.

Subscription Price: One year $12.50; two years, $23. Add $1 per year postage for Canada and Mexico; $2 other foreign.

Change of Address: It is essential that subscribers ordering a change of address give five weeks' notice and provide their old as well as their new address. Please give Zip Code numbers for both addresses.

Manuscripts. All work submitted will be read by the editors. The magazine cannot, however, be responsible for the return of unsolicited manuscripts unless they are accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes.

Information to Libraries: The Nation is indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest, Book Review Index and the Public Affairs Information Service.

THE NATION

Volume 213
No. 22

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need for Presidential wisdom, Nixon proceeded to call the students who were protesting the war in Vietnam "bums," which hardly comported with the dignity of the office and could not be reconciled with what his own Commission on Campus Unrest had to say on the subject. When a critical need arose for Presidential leadership in support of Supreme Court decisions on school desegregation, he quite deliberately encouraged resistance to these decisions by taking a demagogic position on "busing." At a time when there was great need to "cool" the "law and order" issue, he proceeded to inflame it by prejudging the guilt of Charles Manson. At a critical juncture in the history of the Supreme Court, when the need to preserve respect for and confidence in the Court was never greater, his cynical designation of possible nominees —apart from the qualities of the men and and women mentioned—suggested that he was consciously attempting to downgrade the role and function of the Court. As the national mania for professional football has reached such a point of absurdity that it is beginning to stimulate a mild reaction, he took time off from his presumably arduous duties to visit the training camp of the Washington Redskins and give players and coaches a pep talk. On more than one occasion he has delegated to some other person the dirty task of saying what he has wanted to say on some issue of the day. Any doubt, for example, that Vice President Agnew was speaking for the President and at his instigation in launching a running attack against the news media has been removed by Kevin Phillips' recent interview with Agnew in *The New York Times Magazine.*

Again and again, the President has appealed, as Senator Kennedy has noted, to the worst instincts of the American people, instead of attempting, as Lincoln did, to address himself to the better angels of their nature. Not in the memory of the living has any incumbent exercised the leadership function inherent in the Presidency with less grace and wisdom. An idealist Nixon is not. Yet a nation must constantly draw on its store of ideals and values if it is to meet the challenges that confront it. Where there is no vision, the people perish, as the President's spiritual adviser, the Rev. Billy Graham, would *not* say. More than any incumbent of recent decades, President Nixon has debased the quality of Presidential leadership on nearly every important issue. To be sure, he has often expressed his aspiration to usher in a generation of peace, but he manages to make even such commendable expressions sound as if they were intended as slogans in next year's campaign. Recently "an Administration man" explained to R. W. Apple of *The New York Times*, that he had never once been asked by anyone at the White House whether a given program was good, bad or meaningless, but always, "will it help him to get re-elected?" A President who sees no deeper into his country's problems than that is incapable of exerting leadership with foresight or wisdom.

COMING NEXT WEEK

SUBVERTING THE GRAND JURY

How a shield of personal liberty has been converted into a device for surveillance and harassment.

Frank Donner and Gene Cerruti

Blowing Henry's Cover

Senator Goldwater, innocent of any impropriety, appalled the White House by revealing that Henry A. Kissinger, our *de facto* foreign minister, was responsible for the "background briefing" in which U.S. policy toward India and Pakistan was defended. Not that it was the first time the Kissinger curtain had been pulled aside. [See Derek Shearer, "Kissinger Road Show: An Evening with Henry," *The Nation*, March 8.] Senator Goldwater put his disclosure into the *Congressional Record* of December 9, under the title, "India-Pakistan (Background briefing with Henry A. Kissinger)." The story filled more than 4 pages of the *Congressional Record*, and that's a great deal of wordage.

Honest newsmen are in debt to Senator Goldwater for challenging the practice of anonymous briefing. It has been used in previous administrations, of course, but none leaned on it as heavily as do Mr. Nixon and his chief aide. It is a thoroughly unhealthy practice. To all intents and purposes, these sessions are full-blown news conferences, but the lecturer (and no one will depreciate Dr. Kissinger's rostrum style) cannot be held responsible for what he says, since he cannot be named. Benjamin C. Bradlee, executive editor of *The Washington Post*, called recently for a boycott on anonymous backgrounders. "By accepting unattributed information," he said, "we are allowing ourselves to be used by the government"—in effect, deceiving the newspaper reader.

As the practice of propagandizing by backgrounder grew, it also became more complex. Military secrecy once had a top rating of "secret," but after a time even more forbidding categories were superimposed upon it. Similarly, the Johnson administration invented the "deep" backgrounder to cloak highly secret information; and the Nixon Administration has used this device more and more freely. Revealing a source could cost a reporter his job; indeed, his whole news organization could be barred from such conferences henceforth. Naturally, no one tattled.

If, as a result of editorial condemnation and Senator Goldwater's disclosure, the backgrounder falls into disrepute, the government will be handicapped in some of its maneuvers, such as floating trial balloons or letting a government official know that he has fallen into disfavor and had better resign before the ax falls. This may upset the White House, but the public will benefit.

'Internal Affairs'

Senator Kennedy's suggestion that a distinguished American statesman, designated as mediator, might well serve as a catalyst in helping reconcile conflicting elements in Northern Ireland, has drawn hot fire in Parliament and in the British press. It was not a particularly tactful suggestion. The proposal was a bit wide of the mark, and as an Irish-American Catholic, and a Kennedy, the Senator was not the ideal person to advance it.

But the thrust of the proposal was sound. What is needed is pressure on the British Government to do what it should do—that is, implement the political reforms that have been recommended again and again and promised

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more than once. The notion that the terrible feud in Northern Ireland is "an internal affair" of the United Kingdom and therefore removed from American comment and concern is absurd. There are more Americans of Protestant Irish and Catholic Irish origin than there are Protestants and Catholics in the whole of Ireland. Their concern is legitimate. If these Irish-Americans were organizing guerrilla units to join their respective factions, such actions would constitute interference and would be objectionable, but to have a legitimate moral concern and not to voice it is a form of political immorality. It might have been much better for all concerned if down the years world opinion had condemned America's treatment of its black citizens with more consistency and forthrightness, and at the same time had urged reconciliation and acceptance.

Fortunately, concern is rising in this country over the lethal deadlock in Northern Ireland. The number of resolutions introduced on the subject in Congress has been steadily rising. To say that the expression of this concern will only stiffen Britain's resolve to proceed as it has been proceeding is not at all convincing. American concern, properly expressed, cannot be brushed aside as irrelevant or meddlesome. This planet of ours has become quite small, and television has brought images of the bombed buildings, fires and sniper casualties in Belfast and Derry into millions of American as well as English homes. Today the feeling that every man is "a piece of the Continent, a part of the main," has acquired a new urgency and relevance. If world opinion had expressed itself more vigorously, particularly in Britain and in this country, the bloody Pakistani-Indian conflict might have been averted.

In the fall of 1920, Oswald Garrison Villard, editor and publisher of *The Nation*, organized the Committee of One Hundred on Ireland in an effort to persuade the British Government of the day to call off the Black-and-Tan terror in Ireland. Among the members were Jane Addams, Frederick Howe, Norman Thomas, Sen. George W. Norris, and another Irish-American Catholic from Massachusetts, Sen. David Walsh. The committee held public hearings in Washington on what was then happening in Ireland and the proceedings were published in the form of a 144-page report: "The American Commission on Conditions in Ireland: Interim Report." Some might say that this action constituted a presumptuous interference in the internal affairs of the United Kingdom; to others it seemed a timely expression of a concern which was perfectly understandable and quite legitimate. The then British Prime Minister took prompt notice of it.

Ralph Bunche

He was the son of a barber. As a boy in Los Angeles—not the Deep South—he could not use public swimming pools. In 1938, as a researcher for Gunnar Myrdal's classic study of the American Negro, he narrowly escaped lynching. More recently, he and his son were barred from membership in the West Side Tennis Club in Forest Hills. He turned down Harry Truman's offer of appointment as an Assistant Secretary of State because he could not stand the Jim Crow atmosphere of the nation's capital. That was Ralph Bunche's background.

From it, by sheer ability and abundance of good will, he rose to the highest U.N. rank held by any American, and became the first Negro to win the Nobel Peace Prize. He moderated a series of crises; some of his solutions failed, some endured. One of his diplomatic triumphs was the eighty-one-day negotiation that led to the original Palestinian settlement in 1949. His friend and superior, Count Folke Bernadotte of Sweden, was assassinated; Bunche could have suffered the same fate. But he was spared, and Israelis and Arabs alike praised him for his fairness and patience.

He was an internationalist in the best sense. He said: "I have come to believe that what is good for the world is good for my country." For the most part, the world puts it in the reverse order. The resulting mass anguish is what Ralph Bunche strove to avert, and he died still trying.

Crime and Business

First, a bit of history.

In the late 1930s a Chicago mob muscled its way into control of an international union and sent two top-flight gangsters to Hollywood to take charge. One morning some 10,000 movie workers were told that they must join the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees because the industry had just concluded a closed-shop agreement with the union. The employees joined.

In the sequel, the two mobsters, Willie Bioff and George Browne, were indicted for "extorting" money from the industry—some $3 million in all. Both went to jail, as did a prominent movie producer. The producer, after serving time, was retroactively pardoned by President Truman. Willie was less fortunate. One day he stepped on the starter of his car in Phoenix, Ariz., and that was the end of Willie.

Can such things happen today? Dist. Atty. Eugene Gold of Brooklyn tells a story which, if half of it is true, indicates that matters have not changed as much as one might wish.

Last spring, Mobil, one of the nation's largest international oil corporations, was threatened with a truck drivers' strike. In 1969, faced with a similar threat, Mobil had set up a contingency planning office called Mobil Oil Continued Operations (MOCO). MOCO made arrangements with an outfit called Sular Enterprises, headed by one Lazzaro Sangiovanni. The 1969 strike did not come off, but in 1971 Mobil was prepared.

Sular, according to the indictments, rented thirty of Mobil's delivery trucks for $1 a month each and Mobil agreed to pay Sular a delivery price of $120 per truckload of gasoline. In addition, Mobil was to pay Sular $100 as a "finder's fee" for each driver and driver's helper. Mobil authorized Sular to hire 200 men.

The strikebreaking drivers were not doing badly either—except that they didn't get what they were promised. Each was to receive $10 an hour for a sixteen-hour day. Fire Department regulations require that a driver must have worked for an owner for at least thirty days before

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being cleared to drive a fuel truck. Sangiovanni allegedly signed false official papers to enable his men to drive the trucks.

When the strike of 1,600 drivers at Mobil and five other companies began on May 1, picket lines and some incidents of violence interfered with deliveries. On May 3, still according to the official account, Sangiovanni told Mobil officials that he needed at least five men to follow each truck. He allegedly added that he needed an additional "finder's fee" of $200,000. District Attorney Gold says that Mobil tentatively agreed. Two of Sangiovanni's associates then entered the picture and Mobil began to receive threatening telephone calls. Mobil executives, the story continues, thereupon turned over to Sangiovanni and his associates $72,000 in $5, $10 and $20 bills. Part of this money went to the drivers, but the Sular associates are said to have kept about $40,000. By this time the Mobil executives were uneasy and called off the deal after they had paid a total of $130,000. They then notified the authorities.

The December 10th *New York Times* story of the affair, written by Morris Kaplan, says that while Mr. Gold was sharply critical of Mobil, he "emphasized that the company had violated no federal or state laws. Nor did Mobil violate the city's Administrative Code, which bans strikebreaking, he said, because it had not done this 'customarily and repeatedly,' as provided by the code."

Despite this absence of culpability, Mobil found it necessary to take display ads in the New York newspapers denying that it has "knowingly employed a firm with organized crime connections and made inappropriate payments to that firm. . . . From the outset of the strike, we utilized the several outside firms with whom we had contingency plans to assist us in our operations. . . . One of these was headed by a man named Lazzaro Sangiovanni, who did business as Sular Enterprises, Inc. . . . We had no reason to believe Sular was anything but a reputable company. *Our dealings were entirely with Sangiovanni.*" (Italics added.) The last paragraph of the advertisement asserts: "We repeat: Any contention that Mobil knowingly employed a firm with organized-crime connections is absolutely false."

That makes it sound as if Mobil were a sorely wronged company—until Sangiovanni's record is revealed. Both he and the associates of whom Mobil had heard no breath of scandal have police arrest records and have served jail terms. Sangiovanni's is the most impressive. Arrested eleven times, he was sentenced in October 1959 to four-to-eight years in Sing Sing for stealing a tractor-trailer. Three years later he was arrested for armed robbery, and in March 1970 for possession of $1 million in stolen United States Treasury bills.

The security officer of Mobil is an ex-FBI agent. On that account, and considering what everybody outside a monastery knows of the dangers inherent in hiring strikebreakers (even if not customarily and repeatedly), one would conclude that Sangiovanni is a weak reed for Mobil to lean upon.

PHASE TWO

WILL IT WORK? FOR WHOM?

DAVID DEITCH
Mr. Deitch writes on economic and financial affairs for the Boston Globe.

As soon as the Nixon incomes policy came into play on August 15, businessmen and financiers who had prayed for strong government controls on the setting of wages and prices began wondering if the New Economic Program would "work." [See Deitch: "Watershed of the American Economy," *The Nation,* September 13.] It became fashionable, particularly on Wall Street, to suppose that it could not "work," and the correct "line" was to argue that the sooner the controls came off the better, as if the Administration could possibly permit a return of the drift toward economic depression that had prevailed before August 15. With the inauguration of the Phase 2 wage-price machinery and the inability of the stock market to end its precipitous decline, newspapers played up the "confusing" nature of Phase 2, as if the editorial writers had any clear perception of how the economy worked under normal circumstances.

It is a good idea, therefore, to define more precisely what is meant by asking if the Nixon program can "work," and to explore a little further the nature and purpose of the incomes policy with a view toward answering that question.

One important aspect of Phase 2 is that it brings the problem of income distribution in American society to center stage. Once the system worked efficiently to distribute income in certain proportions and to stabilize the allocation of shares, but now it has broken down and is being replaced by a more "rationalized" system that favors increased management and controls, and negotiation. Negotiation of anything means that conditions may possibly be changed, even though the odds are overwhelmingly against it. In this instance, while the purpose of the incomes policy, as the ruling class sees it, is to make permanent the inequitable distribution of income through a formula that links wage improvement to gains in labor productivity, working people begin to detect the deficiencies of the system under which they live; that poverty, for instance, is not ordained by God but by men and that other, non-wage, demands might be made. For this reason, an incomes policy negotiation makes capital owners queasy as soon as it begins, and usually doesn't go on long. Either the controls become tighter, as in a wage-price "freeze"

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that brooks no negotiation, or the system moves back temporarily to a looser economic form.

It is said that no incomes policy has ever succeeded for long in an advanced capitalist country, but what do we mean by succeed? The notion of an incomes policy as the permanent antidote for all class struggle is grandiose indeed, but if we mean that it served as a temporary device to stabilize a system based on a certain relation between property and power and income distribution, then incomes policies have succeeded. Periodic attempts are always being made to devise such a policy, for the stability of the system is increasingly measured by the intensity of the inflation, and inflation is a generally submerged struggle for the distribution of income which the ruling class cannot permit to generate into class struggle.

The Nixon Economic Program is a product of our society. That is a truism, but what it means is that if the ruling class is offering up a new institution designed to make things "work better" and eliminate strife, its character won't be much different from what preceded it. The whole business of why poor people are poor and rich people rich is a great mystery to the nation's press and to ordinary folk, although the latter are cynical about it. One shouldn't expect those who are dreaming up the incomes policy to remove the mystery.

The incomes policy must, in a complicated, confusing way, do what the system did when it was working well on its own to attain a specific kind of stability. In other words, there is good reason why Phase 2 cannot clearly express the inequities that will inevitably be decreed by the new system that is charged with redistributing income in favor of large capital. The decision-making process must be foggy because certain people have got to be hurt by it. We can now become more specific.

Phase 2 will "work" if by work is meant doing what the old business cycle used to do regularly and effectively; that is, restore the stable relationship between corporate profits and wages that normally gets out of line during periods of relatively full employment. The business cycle —expansion, recession, etc.—used to be the most important factor in assuring that, *over time*, stability in income distribution was a normal product of the economic system. The system worked like magic, as if the rigid income distribution were a law of nature.

But the 1960s brought complications. The tremendous influence of Keynesian economic philosophy spread the message that government pump priming could keep the expansion going indefinitely, and by 1966 when the expansion would likely have been permitted to die a natural death in the United States, the war in Vietnam produced the political circumstances which extended the boom far beyond the norm.

Richard Nixon is now famous as the Republican President who brought wage-price controls to America in "peacetime," but it should not be forgotten that it was he who went out of his way to restore recession to the business cycle in 1969-70, after eight years of expansion. What the country found, however, was that the old order no longer worked. The inflation didn't stop, but even more important was the fact that the corporate-labor split of the national income never did get back to where it used to be. Despite huge unemployment and declining real, after-tax income in the working class, the recession was not a stabilizing factor. No matter what the economic managers did, labor's share of the national income kept edging up, at the same time that liquidity problems made the accumulation of profits more imperative than ever to the corporations. It turned out that in a relative sense the recession was hurting the corporations more than the working class.

When confronted with such events, the administration in power must have a plan, an incomes policy. If the corporations can't acquire sufficient income through the normal operation of the economic system, then a new formula must be devised. The incomes policy is designed to do precisely what the old recession used to do—create the income distribution effect of a recession without actually having one. And Mr. Nixon will do that, I believe, no matter what it takes, no matter how rigid the controls must be. Unless he performs this task, the corporations will undertake no expansion of importance on their own volition.

One can expect, therefore, that the Administration will keep trying for a very powerful rise in corporate profits, the only questions being how rapid the rise will be over what period of time, and how much excess depreciation will be included in the profit figure, which is an accounting question. Karl Marx once called accountants the "jackals of capitalism" by way of indicating the importance of numbers juggling to corporations struggling to extricate themselves from inflationary stagnation. The accountants are of first importance to the corporations, now bogged down in Phase 2 and praying for an expansion so hard to come by, and I must go into depreciation for a minute because, to a significant degree, these charges equalize the relative loss in corporate profits vis-à-vis wages and salaries.

The general purpose of the Nixon incomes policy is to facilitate an economic expansion by providing the corporations with resources they could not acquire for themselves in the marketplace. That means creating the conditions for bigger profits or, what is sometimes even better, a larger "cash flow," which is the sum of reported profits and depreciation of fixed capital.

In theory and for public consumption, Phase 2 puts all corporations in the position of regulated utilities as far as concerns profits. But utility companies have learned, to the chagrin of consumers, that there is more than one way to view profits: by raising expenses as high as possible, either by classifying capital expenditures as expense items or by taking excess depreciation, a utility lowers its *reported* profits. Once that is done, the utility has an argument for a boost in rates. Under Phase 2 rules, a company may be able to obtain price increases by getting its accountant to lower reported profits. Among other things, accountants can switch to accelerated depreciation from so-called straight line; amortize "good will"; show overhead costs as direct expense; carry research and development as an expense rather than a capital gain, and adopt any number of other methods designed to lower apparent pretax profit margins and convince the Pay Board that higher prices, hence higher cash flows, are deserved.

The point is that all of these accounting changes involve bookkeeping adjustments of noncash charges. The com-

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pany "reduces" its profits but suffers no actual out-of-pocket costs. "The degree to which profit manipulation efforts will succeed depends in some considerable measure on the nature of the measurement system and on the enforcement process," says a Wall Street accounting expert. "Even with a much higher degree of detail checking than now appears contemplated, most corporate controllers will have little difficulty in making significant and relatively undetectable reductions in reported profit margins." Moreover, the companies that are able to conceal or lower reported profits during Phase 2 will be in a position to report a hefty boost in profits if and when the controls come to an end. This situation is common among many European corporations and American banks and insurance companies, which are able to manipulate earnings through use of so-called "hidden reserves."

"In good years," says the Wall Street accountant, "these companies often charge excessive depreciation, accumulate large bad debt reserves, accrue for imagined liabilities or write-off inventory which is actually salable. In later, less fortunate periods, when higher profits are desired, the understated assets are sold or realized, while the liability accruals are reversed and credited to income. The same effects could be expected to operate in this country after Phase 2."

So the corporations will be deciding whether to boost reported profits or seek greater cash flow, and it appears that more things are working in favor of the latter. If expansion itself is the prime goal of the incomes policy and if cash-tight corporations are looking for any excuse to expand, then we might expect an almost unprecedented boom in depreciation charges.

Just as it is important to know what we mean by getting Phase 2 to "work," so is it important to be precise about the meaning of "stability." In capitalist terms, stabilization is not simply putting a lid on the inflation. It requires, in the first instance, redistributing the burden of the inflation as a precondition for reducing its intensity. Profits must be guaranteed before the inflation figure comes down. In simplest terms, prices must be allowed to go up faster than wages, so that corporations can regain the incentive to invest in new business opportunities, so that the distribution of income between labor and capital can be restored to the old proportions that the system had formerly decreed as inevitable. "This allocation of income in the near future is likely to affect the rate of economic recovery through the effect the profit share has on investment," says an article in the business review of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis in November.

In its Inflation Alert of August 7, 1970, the Nixon Council of Economic Advisers indicated how its policy recommendations are predicated on capitalist values, which is to say that stabilization measures designed to restore a certain distribution of income must be paid for by the working class through lower living standards: "This stable relation between wages and productivity as a requirement for price stability," says the Council, *"if labor's share is to be constant* [original emphasis], is a matter of algebra. Algebra does not, however, impose the requirement that labor's share shall be constant. It is a matter of empirical observation that labor's share has been approximately

Noonan

constant. This approximate constancy is sufficiently pronounced to suggest a strong tendency of the economic system to maintain or restore it. . . ."

As I have pointed out, the great difficulty of getting an incomes policy to perform the old income distribution function of the business cycle stems from the fact that, although the income distribution has edged over toward the side of wages, high unemployment has been the rule and real after-tax incomes have failed to improve in more than half a dozen years, being now for most factory workers below 1965 levels. There seems little doubt that workers have likewise done poorly in the final quarter of 1971 and one can expect further deterioration until the process of redistributing the inflationary burden is completed and corporate profits have substantially recovered.

The postwar history of cooperation between Monopoly Capital and Monopoly Labor dates from the historic Reuther agreement with General Motors that linked wages to productivity gains. It has still not broken down in the current incomes policy development where the big unions are well represented on the Pay Board but where competitive labor is not. At the recent AFL-CIO convention in Bal Harbour, UAW President George Woodcock conceded that, while large unions were fairly successful in gaining Pay Board decisions they can live with, low-income workers and their smaller unions, unorganized workers, and "weaker and helpless" groups wouldn't fare as well under the controls now set up. Since the Pay Board will evidently be lenient in permitting sizable catch-up wage contracts, it appears that unorganized, marginal workers will take the

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brunt of economic stabilization. Evidence just now coming in indicates that the inflation rate will drop more slowly than was forecast, but signs that the expansion is taking hold—albeit slowly—are good evidence that the corporations see big profits ahead, with a redistribution of income taking place *within* the working class. At the same time, there will be more corporate attempts, as in Newark recently, to circumvent monopoly union power by hiring competitive labor at cheaper rates, as well as intensified union efforts to bargain for protectionist legislation, possibly in exchange for incomes policy cooperation.

The expropriation of foreign incomes makes the domestic struggle easier, but this aggravates the unresolved world trade and monetary crisis. Internationally, the United States conceives of stability as rationing income to other capitalist countries, just as it rations income to the domestic working class. It seeks to create the conditions for international expansion by achieving what amounts to a world incomes policy based on a new monetary order and realigned currency rates that favor American capital accumulation. John Connally's hard-line negotiating strategy is based on the notion that America is effectively insulated from foreign recession and that the incomes policy can achieve its own domestic expansion. An amazingly rapid buildup of ruling-class pressure—particularly from the Eastern banking establishment and *The New York Times*—on Connally to relax his stand on a gold price compromise with the Europeans indicates that many are worried that the incomes policy isn't doing its job fast enough to create the expansion so ardently desired. While the current expansion is technically in its thirteenth month from the previous recession low, factories continue to operate at less than three-quarters of capacity, and industrial production remains below the 1969 peak. The bipartisan bill in Congress to raise the price of gold by up to 10 per cent is backed by those wanting consumer tax cuts to force a quicker expansion.

Connally and the other U.S. economic nationalists want to demonetize gold, but they don't know how to do it. Raising the price of gold is a way of putting a little "equity" into a monetary system top-heavy with dollar debts. "Gold is not likely to be demonetized for the simple reason that there is so much of it in the world's monetary reserves," says *The Journal of Commerce*. Quite so, but there is also another reason. The economic nationalists don't want to raise the gold price because they know one rise might not be the last. The message is coming across that a gold price increase is a way of getting the incomes policy to work, that the United States needs an expanding world economy to achieve its own expansion.

The sluggish rate of economic recovery has once again raised the old suggestion that stagnation is a possible route the U.S. economy is traveling over the longer term. Liberal economists have argued that our economy suffers from no shortage of investment or employment opportunities that making more money available to the working class wouldn't cure. But a redistribution of income downward remains more of a theoretical than a practical possibility at this point. Liberal proposals to cut individual taxes enough to fuel a new consumer boom are rejected by the Administration in favor of corporate investment incentives and a preoccupation with raising productivity. This policy stems from the fear that the economy can no longer tolerate either an abortive or a prolonged expansion, the result of which might be a new liquidity crisis stemming from a renewed accumulation of debt relative to actual production.

The incomes policy will be trotted out again and again in coming years as the means to facilitate other expansions, each one possibly more difficult to achieve than the last. Desperate to raise productivity, succeeding administrations will push for more investment incentives, thereby creating more technological unemployment in the industrial sector while pouring workers into the service sector, where productivity gains are small, and into the government sector, where productivity gains are almost nonexistent. The now chronic government deficits are making tax cutting that much more difficult, but also inflation that much harder to control, the need for a harsher incomes policy that much more urgent, and requiring further efforts at rationalizing the economy, at controlling wages.

Foreign earnings and investment outlets will become ever more important in this context, particularly as investment is directed toward automation, and unemployment follows. Untapped markets in Southeast Asia and the Socialist countries will have to be developed. At home, a further concentration of capital in the hands of giant corporations is probably inevitable. In a few years, liberals will be demanding the nationalization of selected industries, no longer profitable and strangling from enormous debt structures. Private economists are already predicting a much greater degree of government involvement in the fundamental decisions of production, prices, profits and wages.

In the meantime, the American political economy will make continued efforts to socialize capitalist losses and costs, but never profits; for corporate liberalism, the problem will be how to move toward a welfare state without redistributing income. Phase 2 will probably do its short-run job, but the economic system will be weakened by it, not strengthened.

Although large segments of the radical movements are understandably reluctant to get involved in national politics, there may be no other choice in the 1970s. Conditions are being created for the transformation of the two-party system because the Democratic Party can no longer perform its traditional function of integrating minority groups into capitalist society. Already, some sectors (for example, the Chicanos) have left the Democratic coalition, or are still competing for power within the party (for example, the blacks, women, youth and organized labor).

The relationship of organized labor to the Democratic Party is obviously in process of re-evaluation: first, because the economic crisis is a ruling-class crisis for which organized labor must eventually be subjected to new controls; and second, because these controls are necessary if the unorganized and marginal workers are to be incorporated into the new managed system at the expense of organized workers' living standards. The question is whether growing segments of the working and *lumpen* classes will leave the Democratic Party, or continue to fight among

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themselves for power within a party that finds it difficult to represent their interests.

The evidence is accumulating that the Democratic Party has begun to lose the capacity to perform its role as co-opting agent of the state. It becomes harder to require minority groups to accept, among other things, a redistribution of income within their ranks. Edmund Muskie's recent critique of "liberalism" and his plea to enlarge the liberal base of support are other signs that all is not well within the Democratic Party and that national politics may undergo startling changes in this decade. It is not clear how long organized labor can stay inside a coalition that is breaking up as members perceive a party that not only won't be reformed but can't even win *because* the coalition is breaking up. The Muskie faction realizes that the Democratic Party has got to move faster toward the welfare state, but there is no way to pay the freight without a rigidly managed economy that is able to facilitate steady expansion without inflation.

My own feeling is that this will get progressively harder to do and that working people will learn a great deal from the burden that periodically will be placed on their living standards by incomes policies designed to alleviate the effects of inflationary stagnation. □

THE WAR NOBODY STOPPED

The current conflict between India and Pakistan is probably the most foreseeable war of this century. Indeed, it was probably the most widely foreseen; among others, The Nation, *in its issue of April 14, 1969, clearly warned of what was to come in an article by Aijaz Ahmad, "'Law and Order' in Pakistan." And in June of this year, Mr. Ahmad updated his warning in a second piece, "The Bloody Surgery of Pakistan."*

It has been evident for months, not only that the war was impending but that autonomy for East Pakistan was inevitable. It was the inability of the rest of the world, through the agency of the United Nations, to assure East Pakistan, or Bangla Desh, of actual, or at least de facto, *independence that brought the situation to an international war. The nations on the sidelines professed their unwillingness to interfere in the domestic affairs of Pakistan, but the presence of 10 million East Pakistani refugees in India, and the repeated incidents of "hot pursuit" in both directions across the Indian-Pakistani border, exposed the pretense of dismissing this struggle as an internal quarrel.*

The articles that follow here trace the steps by which the situation deteriorated into open war, and assay—insofar as that could be done during the days of battle—what prospects for tranquillity lie in the future.

1. The Great Powers Wash Their Hands

V. G. KIERNAN

Mr. Kiernan is a professor of modern history at the University of Edinburgh. His most recent book is The Lords of Human Kind: Black Man, Yellow Man, and White Man in an Age of Empire *(Little, Brown); earlier works are* British Diplomacy in China: 1880-1885 *(Octagon Books) and* The Revolution of 1854 in Spanish History *(Oxford University Press).*

Since March 25, when the Pakistani Army was turned loose on a defenseless East Bengal, events have been unrolling which have been described as not less frightful than the war in Vietnam; and the world has glanced that way, at intervals, and looked away again, and done little or nothing.

In any such case it is a puzzle to know where the responsibility for this *nothing* lies. Ideally, in democratic lands, news agencies report, individuals or bodies alert the public, public opinion is condensed by parliaments, governments take action, or move the United Nations to act. In this case it cannot be said that either information or summons to action have been lacking. Press coverage has been less than it should have been, and intermittent because of frequent crowding out by other events, but there has been enough to give anyone who wanted it a fair glimpse of what was going on. In Britain, *The Times* (of London) has shown more continuous interest than most other papers. In June the *Sunday Times* had two full and horrifying reports by two different writers. One of these was told by several Pakistanis on the spot that East Bengal was going to be cleaned up for good and all, even if 2 million people had to be killed. "This is genocide conducted with amazing casualness," he commented on the cleaning-up process as he watched it. Any nation giving aid to Pakistan was guilty of "financing genocide," wrote the *New Statesman* on June 5. "It is the greatest massacre since Hitler," wrote the popular *Daily Mirror* on June 17, asking for a British initiative.

Numerous individuals and groups, in or out of political life, have tried to rouse opinion. In April, Gunnar Myrdal and a group of Swedish writers and scientists appealed to the governments of the five Nordic states to bring the matter before the U.N. In France, there have been a number of strong condemnations of Pakistan, one in June by the Permanent Board of the French Episcopate, one in September by Malraux. In July, a Canadian parliamentary delegation visited East Bengal, and declared that the province ought to be allowed to decide its own destiny. Various similar protests have come from America. Senator

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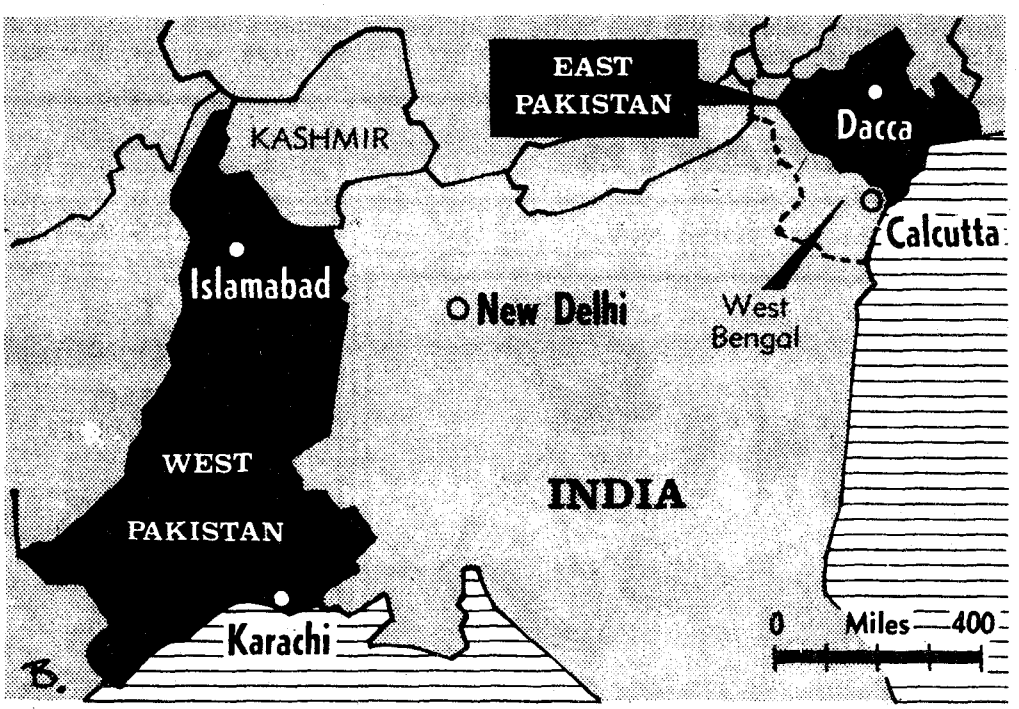
Kennedy has distinguished himself; he was in India in August and made an excellent statement, which he followed with a demand for the cutting off of American aid to the murderers. "I am distressed," he had been quoted a little earlier as saying, "that the Administration finds it so easy to whitewash one of the greatest nightmares of modern times."

The American and other governments can have been in the dark about the situation only if they were anxious to be in the dark, eagerly ignorant like the public of West Pakistan. India has made patient efforts to enlighten them. Mrs. Gandhi appealed for international action on May 26, and since then has made a long series of speeches and statements; she and her foreign minister, Swaran Singh, and other prominent members of her government have visited many capitals. On the other side, Pakistani propaganda has been as crass and crude as was to be expected from a regime with the mentality more of a feudal baronage than of modern statesmanship. That has been so most of all in the explanations offered to foreign observers by its spokesmen in Bengal. "The attempt by West Pakistan's military government to sell the Western world their side of the story sometimes makes General Westmoreland's credibility gaps look like hairline cracks," one journalist wrote. Yet Western governments went on finding reasons or excuses for inaction, and the United Nations reflected their inertia. Its pundits found a deplorable excuse by saying that the affair belonged to the "domestic jurisdiction" of Pakistan. Not long ago all men claimed a right to beat their wives as part of their domestic jurisdiction, but it is a strange sort of domestic business that turns 10 million people out of their homes and leaves them to be fed by another country.

If ever, as the *Guardian* wrote on June 14, it was time for the United Nations to rise to the responsibilities entrusted to it, the time was now—though that newspaper, like too many others, was still talking of *persuading* Yahya Khan to "stop his army's butchery," instead of *forcing* him. Well might Lord Brockway tell a demonstration of supporters of Bangla Desh, or East Bengal, in Trafalgar Square on August 1 that he was "appalled by the inactivity of the great powers and the United Nations." Even charitable assistance to India in its staggering task of keeping 10 million refugees alive was grudging. Mrs. Gandhi had every right to speak with bitterness to her parliament in June of the well-fed world's apathy over the plight of these millions. "If 10,000 refugees go to any European country the whole continent of Europe is afire, with all the newspapers and governments shouting over it." Since then she has had far more, not less, reason for complaint.

All this time India has been on the horns of a whole set of dilemmas. A tremendous strain was put on its resources, just when there seemed, after the victory of the moderate progressives led by Mrs. Gandhi in the general election, a chance of quicker social reform and economic growth. West Bengal, under the weight of its social and economic problems, and with its left-wing parties furiously at odds with one another, has been growing almost ungovernable; for New Delhi to find itself with a shattered East Bengal on its hands as well was an alarming prospect. So was a Communist Bangla Desh under Chinese tutelage. India wanted the refugees off its hands and back in their homes, but they refused to go, and could not honorably be asked to go, until they could return to a homeland free of foreign bayonets. Public anger against Pakistan, and desire for action, have inevitably been strong. But so has been the government's reluctance to face war, which means further crushing expense, besides worse dangers, with no tangible reward. India's painful hesitations over many months are the best answer to Pakistani propaganda about all the trouble having been deliberately brought about by Indian meddling. A stopgap course was pursued by India of



Christian Science Monitor

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giving limited backing to the guerrilla resistance, while appealing with mounting urgency to the civilized world to take the measures it so easily could against Pakistan. The longer civilization looked the other way, the more desperate grew India's predicament.

Most of the West's obvious interests would seem to range it on the side of India and of Bangla Desh. It is in East Bengal that the two staple export commodities of the old dual Pakistan, tea and jute, are grown; and tea has remained a largely British undertaking, as in the days of British rule. It must be presumed that before March 25 the Bengali leaders were counting on Western opinion to prevent the army steamroller from being set in motion; they seem to have thought that America in particular would be well disposed toward an autonomous regime led by the very moderate Mujibur Rahman. Their own political thinking was attuned to the West, and when invasion came they were bewildered by Western inactivity. As a commentator (P. Gill) wrote subsequently, at the outset "the West had an opportunity to support a movement that was both popular and overwhelmingly bourgeois." Here was something the West has searched Asia for in vain; indeed, it has searched so long that it may have abandoned belief in the possibility of such a thing, and decided to put all its money on solid military men instead.

Moreover, the West has skeletons in its own cupboards that make it less inclined to think about Bengali skeletons. Above all, war still drags on in Southeast Asia, and the West is not alone. China has the conquest of Tibet on its record, and Russia the recent occupation of Czechoslovakia. Even India can be taxed with behavior in Nagaland for some years in the past not altogether unlike Pakistan's in Bengal, though on a vastly smaller scale. It was an unlucky coincidence that Ceylon, important as the staging post for Pakistani transport planes and troopships rounding the tip of India, was in the grip of a left-wing rising when the firing began in Bengal, with resulting official panic and severe repression.

As for Britain, the controlled Pakistani press has had a great deal to say about the hurly-burly in Ulster, and some apologists for Pakistan in Britain have echoed its assertion that in Bengal, as in Ulster, action has been taken merely against a few lawbreakers incited by a foreign government. It is a preposterous comparison; there have been far too many deaths in Northern Ireland, but East Bengal has suffered an orgy of bloodshed. Nevertheless, Ulster puts Britain too in the dock, since the imbroglio is the outcome of fifty years of injustice winked at by every British party and ministry in turn; and it has done lamentably much to keep public attention away from Bengal.

Yet Britain ought to feel a special responsibility for what has happened there. To British sins of omission and commission in India was largely due the emergence of Pakistan as an impossible combination of two regions 1,000 miles apart and as different as Sweden from Sicily. Also, many of the dominant groups in West Pakistan, that prevent it from making progress or giving its neighbor any peace, were created by the British to buttress their own power: reactionary landlords, police and army bosses, time-serving bureaucrats. British conservatism is quite capable of taking pride in these fruits of empire, and has always since 1947 had more liking for the police state of Pakistan than for liberal India; and there is a very conservative government in office now. British military men may be supposed to relish the spectacle of a country more or less permanently ruled by the army they trained. Late in September the Air Chief Marshal paid a visit to Pakistan, for no good reason that anyone could learn.

Still, there are other points of view in Britain, and early in May a sense of responsibility seemed to be dawning when nearly 300 MPs of all shades backed a motion urging ministers to work for a cease-fire. There was also some wholesomely stiff language in a debate on June 8 and 9. "How much longer," *The Observer* had inquired just before the debate, "can Britain and the rest of the world continue to refuse to get the United Nations involved in the situation along the Indo-Pakistan frontier?" But nothing came of it beyond a mild statement by the Foreign Secretary, Sir Alec Dougas-Home—a feudal landlord by origin—that civil rule ought to be restored in East Bengal. A pledge was however given that there would be no fresh aid to Pakistan until progress was shown toward a settlement. That was enough to elicit a formal protest from Pakistan early in July, followed by a threat from Yahya Khan, made in an interview in August, to leave the Commonwealth—from which he ought to have been expelled long since. Meanwhile, a West Pakistani cricket team was allowed to tour England, amid polite applause. The English like to be admired for their tolerance and friendliness, but at least half of this is a bland disregard of anything but their own comforts and amusements. To the man in the street the whole affair has been just one more squabble between India and Pakistan, requiring nothing more from him than a small contribution to charity.

Britain has at least done enough to annoy Yahya Khan, if not enough to inconvenience him; America has not done even that. Swaran Singh was sharply critical in a parliamentary debate on June 28 of the callous continuance of American arms shipments to Pakistan. They went on all the same. On August 5 Alvin Toffler wrote in *The New York Times* of this "morally repulsive" aid to the aggressor, while "a planetary catastrophe is taking place in Asia." President Nixon took credit to America for its contributions to refugee expenses, but it seems lunatic logic to give guns with one hand to a gang of brigands, and pennies with the other to console their victims. Late in August the President was quoted as expressing "high regard" for Yahya Khan, and finding fault with India.

Washington is automatically less well disposed to a Labour government in Britain, however timidly progressive, than to a Conservative, and in the same way one may surmise that it found the result of the last Indian general election unpalatable. Similarly, the Pakistani elections, with their threat however remote to "stability," may have induced Washington to look indulgently on anything that would keep the army in the saddle in both West and East. Attracted by cheap labor firmly dragooned by the police, America has sunk considerable investments and loans in West Pakistan. These will be at risk if the economy collapses, and hitherto it has depended on foreign loans plus

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colonial tribute extracted from Eastern Bengal. When Yahya Khan unleashed troops into East Pakistan he had seemingly been convinced by the military clique around him, and very likely convinced the equally ill-informed Nixon, that it would only be a matter of a single swift stroke: within a few days all malcontents would be in jail or in the next world, and order and profits would be restored.

All the powers have been taking West Pakistan, as a force in Asia, far too seriously. It was American patronage and arms that allowed this backward, unstable, really insignificant country to swell itself up like the bullfrog in the fable. Chester Bowles, former U.S. Ambassador to India, traced the series of blunders and miscalculations that made America go on bolstering up the Pakistani Army, and warned of the collision between it and India that has now occurred. Often of late years Russia has seemed overanxious to be friends with everyone, too ready to be drawn into an expensive and futile competition with America by giving aid to all types of regimes, whether it was likely to do any good to the cause of progress or not. Aid to unprogressive regimes like Pakistan's, especially in the shape of arms, benefits only the ruling cliques. Politically, Russia itself has nothing whatever to gain or lose by being in the good or bad books of Pakistan's gangster government.

On August 9 a new treaty of friendship was signed between Russia and India. America, it was reported, had warned New Delhi formally that if it went to war with Pakistan, China would come in, and America would stand by and do nothing. If so, that was a startling threat, meant to scare India into letting Bangla Desh be reconquered, even if Chinese intervention might not really

Backes, Allgemeine Zeitung (Mainz)

be probable. In face of any such threats the treaty could be interpreted as a pledge of protection. "Russia has virtually underwritten Indian defense in the event of an attack by Pakistan," wrote an Indian newspaperman, and this may be true as far as it goes. Most of the twelve articles are in very general terms, but Article 9 provides for immediate consultation on mutual security if either signatory is attacked or threatened with attack. But another view of the treaty is that it signified Russia's anxiety to hold India back from taking any irreversible steps toward war. The anxiety is easy to comprehend. Russia is awkwardly placed between China on the one side and America on the other, with the quicksand of the Middle East always on its doorstep. Yet one would have hoped to see the treaty followed by a firm diplomatic offensive against Pakistan. By compelling the United Nations to do its duty, Russia would have gained greatly in moral credit; and by thus isolating Pakistan it would have reduced the danger that militarists might seek to save themselves by provoking war with India. Mrs. Gandhi's visit to Moscow late in September, quickly followed by President Podgorny's to India, encouraged Indians to hope for growing Russian agreement with their belief in the necessity of pressure on Pakistan.

Podgorny had urged Yahya Khan's government as early as April 3 to put an end to "repressive measures and bloodshed in East Pakistan." Chou En-lai, on the contrary, sent a message, which he published—greatly to his own moral discredit—on April 12, assuring the West Pakistanis of his good will, and promising support if the "Indian expansionists" interfered in what was "purely an internal affair of Pakistan." Repression against a black rising in South Africa could of course be described as a purely internal affair, and doubtless would be so described by Chou En-lai if it happened to suit his convenience at the moment.

Since then the Pakistani military clique must have drawn further encouragement from the extraordinary spectacle of President Nixon getting ready to visit Peking. For years the Chinese have made the air ring with wild allegations of *collusion* between Washington and Moscow; the word is far more appropriate to the aid and comfort that Washington and Peking have both been giving Pakistan. Collusion between China and Pakistan started a long time ago, and momentarily startled Washington; but it soon grew apparent that it was only a maneuver against India; that no Socialist propaganda would be allowed into Pakistani bookshops, and no Communists out of Pakistani jails. All the real advantage of the connection has gone to the reigning Pakistani reactionaries, only the dishonor to China. The plain, simple blockhead sometimes gets the better of the overclever intriguer.

Forty years ago an American statesman spoke of the Japanese Army running amok in China; now a Chinese Government has been applauding a Punjabi army run amok in Bengal. A diehard devotee of Maoism (there are fewer of these on the Left today than there were a few years ago, and in Britain the Bengali issue has been fiercely debated between the small Maoist and the small Trotskyite groups) might have rationalized this by arguing that China, by helping Pakistan to eliminate the educated middle classes of Eastern Bengal was clearing the way for a new movement under Socialist direction. When this emerged, China would privately help it to cut Pakistan's throat. After all, this devil's advocate might have said, a free Bangla Desh under its old half-baked bourgeoisie would be at best on the level of an Indian province, and one has only to look at the Indian half of Bengal to conclude that there would be no great improvement for the masses. But a Communist East Bengal would attract West Bengal to it, break up the Indian Union, and open the way

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for all kinds of splendid revolutionary developments.

Many of these fine prospects have the air of pipe dreams, or of Chinese national interests, real or imaginary, concealed under revolutionary phraseology. A liberated Bangla Desh, dependent on China alone for economic aid, would be for a long time a very poor country, whereas under a leadership able to invite aid from all sides it might well be materially better off, if less purely Socialist.

But the broadest objection to Maoist Machiavellianism is that Socialists cannot afford any longer to ignore ordinary human decency, as they were too often persuaded to do in Stalin's day. Doing or condoning certain evil for the sake of uncertain good is apt to turn out bad bookkeeping. Open endorsement by a Socialist government of a reactionary dictatorship, engaged in bloody suppression of a colonial revolt, cannot be justified by any circumstances. It is a further evil of Maoist diplomacy that it is obliged to go on deceiving its own people, telling them the same lies that the Pakistani people have been told; and all this deception must retard China's own mental and political growth. Socialist countries will have to be far more politically democratic than they are now, before Socialist foreign policies become more healthy.

China apart, the world's reaction to the barbarism in East Bengal has been curiously like its reaction to Fascist aggression in the 1930s, the years of appeasement. Yet today there is no towering Third Reich to be dreaded and appeased; only a stupid little dictator of a poverty-stricken country with nothing but a supply of cheap, sturdy cannon fodder. It is ironic to reflect that, human affairs being ordered as they are, all this bloodshed and misery and peril has been inflicted on mankind for the benefit of a few hundred men—military bosses, feudal landlords, get-rich-quick businessmen—in a half-medieval corner of Asia. Seldom in history have so many owed so much evil to so few. □

2. The Genesis of Resistance

REHMAN SOBHAN

Mr. Sobhan, until March of this year, was teaching economics at Dacca University and editing an English-language weekly, Forum. *He is economic adviser to Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, leader of the Bangla Desh movement. Mr. Sobhan is at the moment in London.*

War between India and Pakistan has emerged as the final arbiter in the Bangla Desh liberation struggle. The Pakistani Army is now faced on all sides by an enemy that enjoys local superiority in manpower and weapons.

Well-prepared defensive positions along the border and heavily fortified fall-back positions in the main cantonment towns enabled the Pakistani Army to inflict losses on the attacker before it was overwhelmed. But these bastions have crumbled with remarkable speed. It is here that the presence of the Bangla Desh liberation army—the Mukti Bahini—has made defeat inevitable for Pakistan. The spread of the insurgency rendered the entire hinterland of the Pakistani Army insecure and their garrisons became beleaguered islands which could survive only as long as their immediate supplies held out. A totally hostile local population made retreat as great a hazard to the West Pakistanis as facing the Indians. Now, as the army of Yahya Kahn withdraws, vast areas of Bangla Desh are coming under the direct control of the Mukti Bahini, and in many of these a Bangla Desh administration has begun to function.

However, the war is likely to draw attention from the fact that Pakistan's military position within Bangla Desh had already begun to erode as the Mukti Bahini grew stronger and more pervasive. By the end of August a full division of the Pakistani Army had been decimated by the freedom fighters and had to be replaced. In the last two months another division was knocked out and in late November the Pakistanis had to fly in another division.

The latest full-scale offensive by three divisions of the Mukti Bahini demonstrated to the Pakistanis the unlimited potential of the Bengali resistance. Armor, aircraft and artillery had to be thrown into the effort to contain this offensive. In areas where the Pakistanis, exercising their right of hot pursuit, pressed the Mukti Bahini into India, they collided with Indian forces, equally belligerent and determined to exercise their own right of hot pursuit. This must have convinced the Pakistanis that, while the invulnerable Mukti Bahini could grow stronger in the days ahead, their own forces were faced with an impossible military situation. They had either to accept the reality of an independent Bangla Desh or stake all in a last desperate gamble of war with India. I had predicted this latter course back in August, writing in the *New Statesman*:

> Yahya may paradoxically prefer Bangla Desh breaking away within the context of an Indo-Pakistan war rather than by its own efforts. This is likely to be more tolerable to him and his generals, who may fear for the unity of what will be left of a Pakistan consumed by regional and social tensions after 75 million Bengalis opt out of the union.

The Pakistanis had prepared for this by raising the cry of Indian "aggression" from the moment that the Mukti Bahini launched its winter offensive. They had hoped to internationalize the war, but needed more than border skirmishes to get the Security Council involved. They may have thought to secure a chunk of Kashmir as recompense for Bangla Desh, but this objective was highly problematical, given India's belligerent mood. The final phase was begun by air attacks on the Indian airport of Agartala in the East and on eight airfields in the West. By this act, which was bound to provoke India to war, the West Pakistanis have conceded that Bangla Desh is lost and that it would be better to hand it over to the Indian Army than surrender it to the Mukti Bahini.

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But who are the Mukti Bahini? How have they made such a dramatic impression in this very short period of time, and what were their tactics? What is the extent of their support and of their success? These questions deserve the attention of a world that has tended to see the issue of Bangla Desh primarily as an Indo-Pakistani confrontation. These young men were strong enough to launch the full-scale offensive against the Pakistani Army which triggered the present war. They have the power to thwart any international action which chooses to bypass the determination of 75 million Bengalis to rule themselves.

What is remarkable about the emergence of the Bangla Desh fighting force is that there was nothing in the contemporary history or culture of the region to indicate a capacity for armed struggle. Few of the young men of the Mukti Bahini had ever handled a gun before the 25th of March. In Algeria, as in many parts of the Middle East or even West Pakistan, guns and armed warfare are part of the national tradition. In Vietnam, a whole generation has grown up with the sound of gunfire as part of its normal experience.

By contrast, the young men of Bangla Desh were more skilled in rhetoric than in warfare. While there had been some violence in street riots, it rarely escalated beyond stones against police batons. Tear gas and occasional police firing raised the scale of conflict, but there was no attempt to respond by taking to firearms.

None of the political groups in Bangla Desh had the sort of apparatus needed to sustain a guerrilla struggle. The Awami League, easily the largest and most pervasive of the parties, was geared to the forms of democratic politics; at best, it was equipped to organize civil disobedience, but quite unprepared to face the Pakistani Army. The parties of the orthodox Left were no better off. Their sources of strength were urban students and intellectuals, a few trade unions and some peasant areas. But these cadres were good primarily for agitational politics and most of them were forced to flee from their areas of influence once the army struck.

Some small groups drawn from factions of the Maoist wing of the National Awami Party (NAP) managed to hold their ground because their base was very small and their operations very restricted. Theoretically, they were perhaps better equipped and more skilled at submerging themselves in their rural bases. But they too were quite untrained in the methods of guerrilla struggle, and some at least were confused by Peking's apparent declaration of support for Yahya.

As a result, in the initial phase of the army counterattack, the cadres were either put to flight or compelled to lie low. Then the army's indiscriminate use of terror led to widespread destruction of life and property and began the exodus of refugees which has today reached 10 million.

However, the army's "kill and burn" forays, which were at first aimed indiscriminately at Hindus, were supplemented by a more selective attack on the Awami League and the cadres and supporters of the groups on the Left. This presupposed some understanding of Bengali society. The West Pakistanis were obliged to recruit political parties and social groups which could act as their eyes and ears in the furtherance of selective terror and eventually assume responsibility for the task.

The army organized local "peace committees," drawn from the right-wing parties such as Jamaat-e-Islam and from various Muslim League parties that had been trounced in the December 1970 elections. In the rural areas they sought out village headmen, affluent farmers and local politicians who had made up the Ayub-created Basic Democrats. These in turn used their more able-bodied and younger followers, reinforced by local hoodlum elements and some elements of the proletariat lured by the offer of free food and a pittance a day, to make up the Razakars, or fighting gangs.

The idea was to use the Islamic parties and rivals of the Awami League that had been eclipsed by the elections. Where ideology was an inadequate incentive, the offer of Hindu land, possessions, cash and women proved more enticing. The rich farmers, feeling threatened by the forces let loose by the elections, saw this as a last opportunity to preserve the order of privilege which had reached its climax under Ayub's Basic Democracies system. In the towns, Bengali capitalists and elements of the middle class, fearing for their privileges and wealth, looked to the army for support.

These groups were used to spy out Awami League and NAP workers, as well as Hindus, who were then liquidated by the army. As a result, in the May-June period the political base for guerrilla actions had been almost eliminated. Indeed, widespread use of terror made otherwise sympathetic villagers hesitant to shelter political workers on the run or the occasional commando group. The Pakistani Army proved that, if you have no compunctions about whom you kill and how much destruction you visit on a people, a level of terror may be attained that paralyzes action. The Nazis adopted such tactics in occupied Europe, where they used collective punishment to deter sabotage and shot hostages every time a German soldier was killed by partisans. They could do so because they were dealing with alien and subject peoples, for whom they felt no sympathy, and whose political allegiance they did not seek. The Pakistani Army similarly functioned as an army of occupation and showed by its behavior that it was not restrained by any sense of common nationality with the Bengalis. Indeed they shared the conviction of their Bengali victims that Pakistan had died on March 25, for in our day no army or government would dare to inflict such damage on a people with whom it expected to share a common future.

The purpose of these tactics was not just to intimidate the local population but to inhibit guerrilla action. If you know that two villages will be razed and 100 people shot if you blow up a bridge, you will probably think twice before setting the fuse. It is a testimony to the courage and political awareness of the villagers that, after their initial fear, they were willing to risk reprisals by providing cover for the guerrillas. There are many reasons for this change of heart, but probably the major one was the hatred and desperation engendered by the genocidal abominations of the army.

In this situation, any immediate and dramatic resort to large-scale guerrilla warfare was improbable. Rather

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than wait for better conditions, the sector commanders of the Mukti Bahini broke up their formations and concentrated on commando operations. This meant that, rather than seek direct confrontation with the Pakistani Army, as they had in the first weeks, they sent out small units on limited actions. These groups ambushed army convoys and raided isolated posts, with the objectives of capturing weapons and keeping the enemy in a state of perpetual tension.

Apart from direct attacks, the main aim was to disrupt the communications that were crucial to the survival of the Pakistani Army in an alien land. In riverine Bengal, bridges became an inevitable target, as did embanked roads and railway lines. Sufficient success was achieved to force the army to move increasingly on the river routes. The monsoons were something of an advantage to the invaders, since they could use many channels that are not navigable in the dry season. The Pakistani appeal to the world for shallow draft landing craft—to be used ostensibly for distributing food—was part of the logistical plan for the dry season that has now arrived.

The Mukti Bahini were also alive to the importance of denying economic resources to the invader. It undertook to bring all exports to a standstill so that foreign exchange would not be available to the West Pakistani economy. West Pakistan normally consumed 80 per cent of Bangla Desh's export earnings and, under the new conditions, could be expected to take it all. The main targets were jute and jute goods and tea. Jute warehouses were attacked and shipments from the producing areas to the marketing centers were intercepted. This was successful to the point that not more than one of three shiploads was getting through, and export earnings from jute products in the coming season were not expected to exceed 25 per cent of the norm.

In industrial areas the aim was to preserve capital equipment, but to slow production by persuading workers to stay away. Power stations and electric grids were attacked. It was hard to maintain a work boycott over any length of time because, however dedicated to the cause, desperately poor workers could not be expected to subject their families to starvation. It was thus a measure of the politicization of the working class than in industrial areas, even after eight months, many mills could muster barely 50 per cent of their workers, and quite a few not even that. The work force was augmented in some areas with non-Bengali labor, but that was offset by the army's persistent use of terror against workers, which drove them back to the villages.

Once frogmen had been trained in the use of limpet mines, attacks on shipping were stepped up. Three of twelve oil tankers of the local oil companies were put out of commission. The more recent use of gunboats by the Mukti Bahini was the final blow, and four foreign shipping companies had instructed their vessels to bypass Bangla Desh ports before India entered the war. United States and British insurance companies had doubled their premiums for war risk and civil commotion, thereby adding to export costs and reducing net receipts of foreign exchange.

Even though some exports of jute, mainly from stocks, were sent out, these were one-shot ventures. For the first time in Pakistan's quarter-century history Bangla Desh had become an economic liability to West Pakistan. The mounting economic crisis in the West has already raised the cost of the war to danger levels and this must be reckoned as an achievement of the resistance comparable to the withholding of fresh aid commitments by donor countries.

In the initial phase of resistance the Mukti Bahini could rely on professionals. It was evident, however, that their numbers would have to be substantially increased if they were to become a serious threat to the Pakistani Army. The unending flow of young men volunteering to fight for the liberation of their motherland indicated that manpower would be no problem. The problem was to train and equip them.

A two-tier training system was introduced. Youth camps were set up to attract all young men, and these soon had some 250,000 volunteers eager for action. But limitations of weaponry and training personnel made it impossible to employ them all. In the camps they were kept fit and given some rudimentary training. They were also screened, and the best material was selected for the more rigorous training required by the regular Bangla Desh army.

Rather than leave the vast majority of volunteers idle in the camps, a second training scheme was started to build up a guerrilla force. These boys were subjected to a less intensive and shorter training schedule, but were schooled in the use of light automatic weapons, mortars and explosives. It was planned to put 100,000 of these youths in the field by the end of November, with another 100,000 to follow. They were infiltrated into villages and towns where they were to merge with the local population. They were equipped with sten guns, rifles, some 2-inch mortars and explosives.

Because Bangla Desh lacks jungle or mountains for concealment or retreat, the support of the local population was essential. As far as possible, young men were sent to their home areas. They lived with the local people who fed them and provided warning and intelligence. To get villagers to this point of cooperation required some preparatory assaults on the peace committees and their fighting gangs. Commando raids were stepped up. Late in October, Khawja Khairuddin, a local right-wing leader, confessed to John Woodroffe of the *Baltimore Sun* that some 20,000 collaborators and their families had "sacrificed" their lives defending the "integrity" of Pakistan. This heavy toll succeeded in many areas in cleansing the pond where the guerrillas—the fish—had to swim. As a result there are many parts of Bangla Desh where guerrillas moved freely and publicly.

This ascendancy was not attained in most of the urban areas, and as a result guerrilla actions there were more sporadic and their presence more clandestine. Here again a rudimentary infrastructure had to be constructed to serve the guerrillas. Shelter and transport had to be found for them, and funds to finance their operations. Most urban Bengali middle-class households were approached for funds for the resistance and most of these—including some senior civil servants, office workers, businessmen—paid to finance the guerrillas. Local fund raising was regularly

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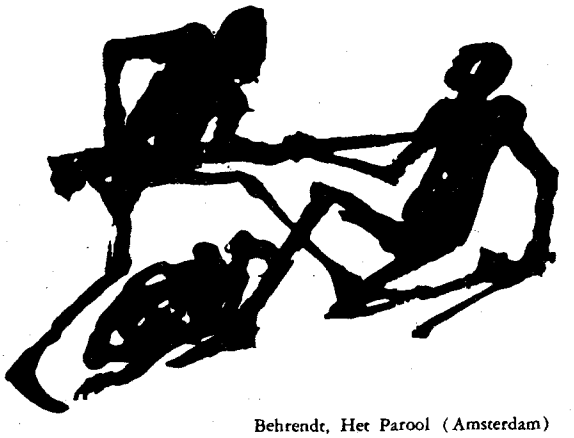

Behrendt, Het Parool (Amsterdam)

supplemented by daring bank robberies staged by the guerrillas themselves.

From this rather rudimentary cover the urban guerrillas mounted quick ambushes on the army and their collaborators. Assassination, sabotage and bombings created a sense of total insecurity in the towns. Results varied, but all reports in the past several weeks indicate a dramatic escalation of urban violence, even in the capital city of Dacca. In a desperate attempt to break the guerrilla network, the army was forced to impose a twenty-four-hour curfew and initiate a house-to-house search. But they netted only 138 "suspects" and Dacca remained as insecure as ever.

The army continued to burn villages and stage mass executions, but the increase of guerrilla actions and their more pervasive presence had fortified public morale, so that terror was becoming counterproductive. A sense of national consciousness, reinforced by the hatred aroused by army brutality, made it possible to identify the enemy and define the goals of the struggle. Independence for Bangla Desh was a straightforward objective to which 98 per cent of the population could unambiguously commit themselves. Some of the right-wing parties and some of the older generation in the urban areas who had sentimental memories of the Pakistani movement may have had reservations. But the guerrillas could bank on the support of the overwhelming majority of the population.

As people saw that the Pakistani Army was bleeding, that their own sons were there beside them to fight the army, the ordinary citizen was being turned into a positive weapon. Political cadres had to work closely with the guerrillas, so that the people were educated in the politics as well as the techniques of this new phase of struggle. A large proportion of the guerrillas were themselves students and hence politically conscious and articulate. The problems remained formidable, since guns and violence had to be recognized as a new reality in villages that had been relatively peaceful for centuries.

The political goal of independence was simple and comprehensible enough, but obviously the political message need not stop there. The political beliefs of different guerrilla groups and the objective situation in an area played some role. Where, for instance, peace committees had been led by local village headmen and supported by the affluent, popular feeling was channeled into class as much as nationalist lines. This generated a popular impulse for redistributive measures, but often no positive social program emerged to fill the vacuum created by the elimination of the local elite groups.

The vacuum in ideas was as evident among orthodox Left groups in the few areas where they operated as it was in the more pervasive, radical Awami League cadres. Objective circumstances have brought their respective positions much closer as the national and class struggles have coalesced. But they have both suffered from lack of any clear design of the new order or trained cadres to refashion village society, as the Red Army did in the liberated zones during the civil war against Chiang.

In the most recent phase of the struggle, guerrilla action inside was meshed with assaults by regular units of the Mukti Bahini on the Pakistani Army. Tension with India had tied down the five divisions of the Pakistani Army on the perimeters of Bangla Desh. They were dug into defensive position fashioned to meet a conventional attack from across the border. Their own strategy demonstrated a lack of confidence in the outcome of such a confrontation. They believed that they would lose the use of the airfields, which were vulnerable to air attack, and that internal communications would be rendered insecure by the guerrillas. They therefore had to move their supplies to the border where they expected to fight a defensive war as long as their supplies held out—which was reckoned to be about three weeks. There was no longer any hope for reinforcement from the West, since the forces there faced their own confrontation with India. As a result the Pakistani Army within Bangla Desh was put on its own and found it increasingly difficult to deploy itself against the guerrillas as long as the state of tension with India continued. This was fortunate for the guerrillas, for it coincided with their own offensive inside Bangla Desh. Here they now had to confront an enemy weak in skills and low in morale. Imported West Pakistani Rangers—a paramilitary force—were blind and helpless in a foreign land and became easy targets. Similarly, the largely non-Bengali Civil Defense Force had been built from scratch and was low in skills and experience. The more numerous Razakars (fighting gangs), predominant in the rural areas, were by now proving a mixed blessing. Apart from a hard core of zealots, most of their members had joined up for personal gain. As the tide turned, they were transferring their allegiance. This had compelled the army to keep them lightly armed; it hardly wanted AK-47s to find their way into the hands of the guerrillas.

Faced with a progressively deteriorating situation, it is less than surprising that Pakistan has chosen the desperate course of full-scale war with India, which promises to put an end to twenty-four years of colonial domination by West Pakistan over the more numerous people of Bangla Desh. The Pakistani Army has converted the peaceable Bengalis into a warrior people whose commitment to nationhood has been hardened by the experiences of the resistance. It remains to be seen if this same West Pakistani junta whose blunders transformed a parliamentary movement for democracy into the Bangla Desh liberation struggle can survive its loss of East Pakistan and hold West Pakistan's diverse nationalities together by continuing to invoke the self-serving rallying cry of Indian domination. □

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3. From Genocide Toward Statehood

VED P. NANDA
Mr. Nanda, born in what is today West Pakistan and now an Indian national, is a professor of law and director of the international legal studies program at the University of Denver College of Law.

Regardless of the outcome of the Indian-Pakistani war, the demand for Bangla Desh, an independent East Pakistan, should be given serious consideration. For, not only does the genesis of the current conflict lie in this demand but even more important, it raises the uneasy question of the parameters of the alleged right of self-determination.

At the outset, the claim for Bangla Desh should be differentiated from similar claims made in the recent past, notably by Biafra and Katanga. First, unlike Biafra and Katanga, East Pakistan is not physically contiguous to the political body from which it would break free. Second, East Pakistan prides itself on a rich cultural heritage reflected in a distinct language, literature and life style developed over centuries of history. Seventy-three million East Pakistanis, constituting 55 per cent of the population of Pakistan, identify themselves culturally and intellectually much more with West Bengal and the rest of Sanskrit-based Indian thought than with the Persian and Arabic-based cultures of the people in West Pakistan—the Punjabis, Sindhis, Baluchis and Pathans.

East and West Pakistan have never comprised a cohesive nation. At the time of its creation in 1947 the two factors that seemed to bring together its disparate components were a common religion, Islam, and hatred of India. Within a decade, however, disillusioned intellectuals in East Pakistan were having second thoughts about the wisdom of their earlier decision to be a part of Pakistan. For notwithstanding a common religion, political and economic domination of East Pakistan by West Pakistan, especially by the Punjabis, has been characteristic of its East-West Pakistan relationship. East Pakistanis have consistently resented their treatment as inferior citizens.

Indian Express (New Delhi)

The ruling elites in Pakistan have always been a clique of West Pakistani military leaders *cum* landlord politicians. The representation of East Pakistanis in the central government services of Pakistan was reported to be barely 15 per cent in 1970, and their representation in the officer corps of the Pakistani Army has never exceeded 10 per cent. In the last fifteen years, only one East Pakistani was appointed a minister in the central government, holding the finance portfolio for only four days.

There seems to be ample substantiation of charges of "neo-colonialism" against West Pakistan's economic exploitation of the East. The latter has been used as a captive market for the former's manufactured goods, while supplying the former's needs of war materials and financial resources. According to official estimates, $1 billion net of resources was transferred from East to West Pakistan during the period 1948-68. East Pakistan's budget has been a mere 20 per cent and its share in Pakistan's development funds a mere 30 per cent. While the bulk of Pakistan's foreign exchange—between 65 and 70 per cent—was earned by East Pakistan, it received only a 30 per cent return for it. Between 1965 and 1970, the annual economic growth rate of West Pakistan was 6 per cent as compared with 4 per cent in East Pakistan.

The simmering unrest surfaced in a most spectacular fashion in December 1970, when in Pakistan's first general elections, the East Pakistani electorate gave an overwhelming victory to the Awami League, a party whose election platform called for regional autonomy. The League, under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won 167 out of 169 National Assembly seats in East Pakistan. Since the total seats for the entire country were 313, the League's victory at the polls virtually assured it of implementing its program, if normal political processes had been followed.

However, West Pakistani leadership was firmly opposed to allowing the League to assume power, and was able to postpone the convening of the National Assembly, the first task of which was to draft a new constitution for Pakistan. Eventually, a breakdown of negotiations between Pakistan's President, Yahya Khan, and Sheikh Mujib was swiftly followed by a military crackdown on Dacca on March 25. Systematic and ruthless acts of "genocide" committed by West Pakistani troops in East Pakistan caused deaths estimated at between 1 million and 1.5 million, while 9 million to 10 million refugees fled across the border into India and an equally large number scattered themselves throughout East Pakistan. What followed is well known. The Mukti Bahini (Liberation Army of Bangla Desh—the Bengali Nation) started operations in East Pakistan; the Indian-Pakistani war broke

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out; India recognized the Bangla Desh Government; the U.N. Security Council reached an impasse and the General Assembly took up the problem for discussion.

What took the United Nations so long to start discussing this highly volatile conflict is still a mystery even to its most ardent supporters. A legalistic and highly technical argument justifying U.N. inaction is that under Article 2(7) of the U.N. Charter no intervention is permitted in the "internal affairs" of a member state. But an interpretation of Article 2(7) so strict as to ban all discussion of one of the greatest human disasters in history does not conform either to the letter or to the spirit of the Charter. India had repeatedly alleged that the problem was truly international, for India was unable to bear the impact of the refugees on its economy. Also, several Indian politicians had been advocating war as the least costly alternative. Allegations of "genocide" and systematic violations of the human rights provisions contained in various U.N. covenants and conventions should certainly have warranted a discussion.

But unfortunately, even when war between India and Pakistan was obviously imminent, U.N. members were either wishing that the problem would disappear or pretending that it did not exist. A lesson to be learned from this conflict is that in similar situations in the future, Article 2(7) will have to be interpreted broadly. The new Secretary-General must play a much more active role under Article 99 of the Charter if the prevention of such tragedies is to be considered a major U.N. objective.

Since the question never even came to debate, the U.N. did not pass on the validity of the argument for granting self-determination to East Pakistan. However, judging by U.N. practice, such a claim probably would not have found favor with most member states. For although the U.N. Charter refers to the principle of self-determination in Articles 1(2) and 55 and the international covenants on human rights provide that "All people have the right of self-determination," this right invariably has been viewed in juxtaposition with the right of a state to its "territorial integrity," also recognized in the U.N. Charter. In U.N. practice, the conflict between the two has always been resolved in favor of the latter: in both the Congo crisis and the later Biafran claim, the U.N. preference was unequivocal, for while it came to the aid of the central government of the Congo to prevent the secession of Katanga, it did not even discuss the Biafran claim. Similarly, the world community has consistently ignored several other claims for self-determination—those in Formosa, Sudan, Chad, Ethiopia, Tibet, Kurdistan. The only exceptions have been the colonial situations. The U.N. and the Organization of African Unity have repeatedly affirmed the right to self-determination of white-dominated black populations in Africa.

East Pakistan is an excellent example of why the time has come when the right to self-determination should be recognized on an individual basis even in noncolonial situations. The people there had voted in free elections, and their elected representatives were forcibly prevented from assuming power. The two parts of the country are physically separated and the people in the two parts are different linguistically, culturally and ethnically. The political and economic domination of one part has resulted in a consistent pattern of exploitation of the other. Charges of gross violations of human rights have been substantiated by independent observers. An independent East Pakistan has the potential to be a stable country; with some international assistance, it could become economically viable over a short period. Finally, its separation from West Pakistan would not threaten the economic viability of the latter or plunge it in disorder or challenge the existing world order. Therein, again, the situation differs from both Katanga and Biafra.

Of course, East Pakistan would not be a major military power. But this should not be a reason for denying its claim to independence: a country's political stability or its chances for survival can no longer be measured solely in terms of its military strength. The establishment of an independent East Pakistan might eventually lessen the tensions that have characterized the East-West Pakistani and Indian-Pakistani relationships.

Although the possibility of a political settlement in East Pakistan now seems specially grim, perhaps the world community has learned not to ignore such claims in the future. The criteria mentioned here should offer a starting point to determine the validity of a claim for self-determination, and their intelligent and sensitive application might avert similar future disasters. □

Cable TV: Omission by Commission

SIDNEY W. DEAN, Jr.
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The long awaited report of the Sloan Commission on Cable Communications is both a benediction and a body blow for the prospect that cable television might become an open carrier system for anyone who wishes to distribute and receive. The blue-ribbon, sixteen-member panel, established in June 1970, has produced thirty-one recommendations for public policy, hammered out of the compromises and accommodations to which the commission process is so vulnerable.

The commission was established by the Alfred J. Sloan Foundation as its maiden venture into the assessment of technology. Dr. Edward S. Mason, economist and former dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Public Administration, is chairman of the $500,000 study. Paradoxically, his commission decided that it could not assess the massive uses and revenues of cable in either business or education. Business uses now account for more than half of the $20

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billion revenues of the telephone systems. Educational communications are a $30 billion activity. The omission of the two largest users of communications helps explain why the report is skeptical about major technical improvements in cable television or the sufficiency of investment capital over the next ten to fifteen years.

The commission gives its illustrious support to the unleashing of broad-band cable development in the public interest. It predicts that within ten years 40 to 60 per cent of U.S. families will have access to a cable. It calls for a minimum capacity of twenty TV channels. It warmly endorses the sale of programs and other services direct to the public. It spells out the extraordinary benefits that can be delivered by "The Television of Abundance."

The report attempts to untie the hobbles placed on the expansion of cable TV by the broadcasting industry's controls over copyright, and influence with the FCC, in the Congress and at the White House. The timing of its release could not have been improved: the FCC had just sent a letter of regulatory intentions to the Congress; the White House Office of Telecommunications Policy, under its director, Clay T. Whitehead, has now sponsored a three-headed hybrid fabricated by copyright holders, broadcasters and the sullen cable operators. The hybrid deal was designed to take the broadcasters' arm off the Congress and White House; to permit the Congress to go back to work on the 1909 Copyright Act, which has been stalled since 1966 by the cable impasse; to encourage cable entrepreneurs to find capital to start up in bigger cities; and, above all, to guarantee television stations in the largest 100 markets (with 85 per cent of the population) another long cycle of immunity from effective cable competition.

The Sloan Report boldly proposes to let cable into every city market by reasonable pickups of distant stations and thus to compete on fair terms with broadcasters for copyright programs. It advocates depriving broadcasters of their extortionate long-term program monopolies. But while the Sloan Report was still at the printer's, the hybrid deal was made. There was no public involvement or intent to secure public hearings or Congressional review. The Sloan Report will be a useful source of light and heat to combat the inter-industry collusion to restrain trade and competition in programming.

So far so good, but the report does not go far enough. In a letter to chairmen Pastore and McDonald of the Senate and House subcommittees on communications, the ACLU has denounced the omission from both the FCC letter and the industry compromise of "consideration to the First Amendment realization of the access and diversity inherent in cable television." In its summation, the ACLU urges the Congress "to promote the development of the broad-band communications carrier networks as open systems with unrestricted capacity to meet total demands at fair and reasonable rates and terms. Nothing less will satisfy the constitutional mandate against abridgment of speech and press in cable communications carriers which have no practical restrictions on their capacity and universality of connection and access."

The Sloan Commission has done a grave disservice to the public interest by compromising this paramount goal of public policy for cable. The commission, in a long debated decision, accepted the cable promoters' arguments that they could not prosper as common carriers, that they required the revenue and profits from programming in order to secure capital. The commission's compromise proposal is that cable systems be given complete control over two television channels and the right to absorb all other cable capacity not used by others.

If this view should prevail in the FCC, it is inevitable that cable development will parallel the monopoly structure of broadcasting. The many devices available to cable operators—through rates, contracts, capacity and facilities (such as two-way, pay-TV, localized circuits)—to deny others use of the cable will become permanent blocks to independent access. As the economic studies of Prof. Bruce M. Owen and others attest, carriers who engage in program merchandising that is paid for either by advertising or directly by the public have irresistible profit motives to restrict competitive access, to delay additional capacity and new facilities, and to siphon their earnings into program and hardware development.

The commission recognized its compromise:

> The arguments in favor of divorcing ownership from transmission derive additional strength from the inherent monopoly of a cable system in any locality as opposed to the competition of several over-the-air broadcasters in most places. Common carrier status may, indeed, be the way cable should and will go as it achieves maximum penetration and overtakes or supplants over-the-air broadcasting. At this point in time, however, the commission believes that imposition of common carrier status would be unrealistic and an impediment to the desirable growth of cable.

Having accepted that there will be a scarcity of carrier capacity and that the carriers will themselves dominate programming, the commission felt compelled to adopt compensating recommendations on cable carrier privileges in other policy areas. For example, the report favors allocating capacity by types of uses; it places arbitrary ceilings on the number of cables under one ownership, on local and U.S. coverage; it sets a ceiling of two television channels per user. All of these contrivances would be unnecessary if cables were regulated, like the telephone, telegraph, postal and satellite systems, as common carriers.

The only argument advanced in the report for carrier control of programming is the alleged necessity to secure capital. The commission offers no supporting financial testimony nor evidence by analogy—such as from the telephone industry's unparalleled success in attracting loan and equity capital into new technology. Indeed, the two commissioned papers in the report which deal with access policies call for common carrier status. One is by Lionel Kestenbaum, the leader in the successful fight to block the merger of IT&T with the ABC network; the other is by John de J. Pemberton, an authority on civil liberties.

Strangely enough, after endorsing a dominant role for cable operators in programming, the Sloan Commission also gave its support to a media monopoly position that has been challenged even by key Congressmen and the FCC—namely, by endorsing a limited ownership of cable systems by local television stations and newspapers. Since about half of all local cable companies are already owned

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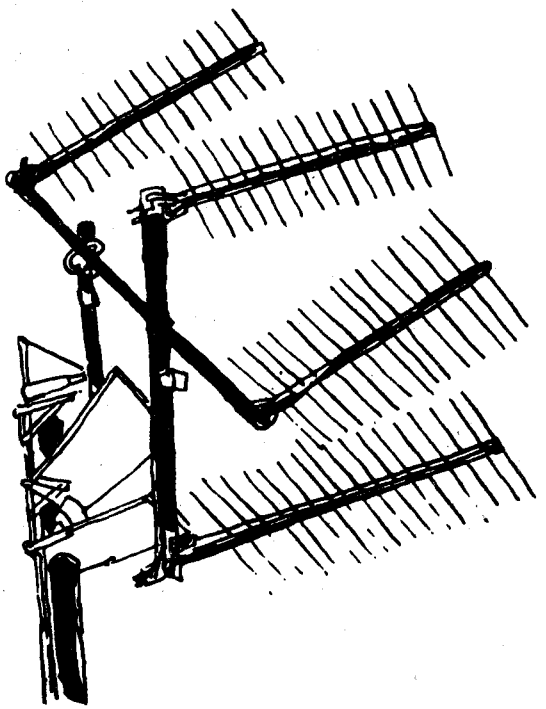

by television or newspaper interests and since there are only twenty-four cities in the United States that still enjoy competitive newspaper publishers, this invitation to further monopolization of the major media in local areas seems irresponsible. Once again, the commission bases its position on the need for capital and would even remove the restraints on cross-ownership of cable with other local media "if there were no other cable applicants." The commission has apparently ignored the scandals of municipal inside deals in franchises like the Buffalo *Courier-Express* newspaper-radio-TV-cable sweepstake.

Having sanctioned degrees of cross-ownership and restrictive concentrations, the Sloan Report proposes giving cable carriers further editorial power by recommending that cable systems be relieved of Fairness Doctrine obligations to present balanced viewpoints on public issues and political contests. Since it may be twenty years or more (the duration of many franchises, including those in New York City) before open access at fair, uniform terms is available to all, this exemption is inexplicable. Coupled with it is a puzzling recommendation that cable operators (or an engineer) may cut what they judge to be personal attacks off the air.

Yet on the free-speech issue, the Sloan Commission wisely adds its weight to the FCC recommendation that cable carriers be relieved of responsibility for illegal speech or acts, since under federal and state laws the originator or spokesman takes full legal responsibility. This provision is important, since content liability which has been imposed on operators by their franchises has been used to impose on independent producers delays, expenses for recording, pre-censorship of content, or even denial of access.

"Monopoly" must have been ruled a taboo concept in the commission's proceedings. Nowhere does the report examine the real consequences of the fact that all 2,800 cable companies now reaching 6 million families are monopolies in their own areas. Such questions as the assurance of nondiscriminatory access, prompt subscriber connections in the entire area, undercapitalization and risks of early obsolescence are not raised. The commission's assertions that the enforcement of reasonable rates to program and service producers will be "self-regulating" and "governed by the market" are irresponsible—especially since independent producers may discover that the carrier has decided to produce competitive programs.

Nor does the report recognize the peril to the public interest in common ownership and vertical control between carriers and manufacturers of cable and terminal equipment. These relations, once established and legalized, are almost impossible to correct or regulate. As the telephone industry has shown, practically all of the great promises of cable will be realized by the receiving, transmitting, switching, storage, retrieving, printing and computing terminal systems. By its *Carterfone* decision, the Supreme Court forbade carriers to require the use of their own terminal hardware. Before it is too late, the rush of cable carriers, terminal equipment and program producers to form conglomerates must be halted and reversed. Sloan does not recognize the issue. Of course, the Congress itself has as yet passed no cable legislation!

A final critical question needs to be asked: "How did a commission of such qualifications arrive at so many questionable conclusions, and fail to confront so many determinants of public policy?" These and other defects in the commission's report, as printed, appear to stem from its professional methods. Procedurally, the commission did not adopt a basic statement of the public's interest in the development of broad-band communications. Nor did it refer to goals previously proposed by the President's Task Force on Communications Policy, by the National Academy of Engineering study, or by the Electronic Industries Association filings with the FCC.

Lacking goals, the commission lacked criteria whereby to evaluate its staffs' and editors' recommendations, and indeed its own conclusions. Lacking goals and standards, it had recourse to a body of assumptions and premises, usually unsupported and often unwritten. For example, the commission was directed to explore the future of *cable* communications. It chose to exclude hard evaluations of carrier and terminal technology, the massive business and education markets, the vital financial issues; it focused instead on "The Television of Abundance." The loaded image "television" made plausible the sanctioning of carrier involvement in programming, the protecting of broadcasters from the "threatened" [*sic*] challenge of cable. It permitted the commission to remain silent on the perils of concentration and monopoly.

Therefore, the conclusions of the Sloan Report must be considered as unreliable compromises on selected aspects of profound, long-term social and national issues. The Sloan Report is an ideal case study of the methodological pitfalls in public policy studies by commissions. If a camel is a horse designed by a committee, a public policy study may be a compromise constructed by a commission. The pioneer survey of the future of cable television, "The Wired Nation" (*The Nation*, May 14, 1970), better identifies the fundamental policy issues with which citizens and government must now deal. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

'I Am Not a Marxist, I Am Marx'

HISTORY AND CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS. *By Georg Lukacs. Translated by Rodney Livingstone. The M.I.T. Press. 356 pp. $8.95.*

AUTOPSY OF REVOLUTION. *By Jacques Ellul. Translated from the French by Patricia Wolf. Alfred A. Knopf. 300 pp. $8.95.*

MICHAEL HARRINGTON
Mr. Harrington's books include The Other America *and* Toward a Democratic Left *(Macmillan).*

The Marxists have attempted to change the world. Now it is necessary to understand it.

I do not stand Marx's eleventh thesis on Fuerbach on its head with any enthusiasm. But it is, alas, a more accurate description of the intellectual work of his followers during the past half century than the confident activism of the original: that the Marxists would not simply interpret reality but change it. Up until 1914 it was possible to argue that there was an intimate relationship between Marxian theory and the political practice of the working-class movements. The contributors to Kautsky's *Neue Zeit* were both serious Marxist intellectuals and workers' leaders. But on August 4, 1914, when the European social democracy joined the army, it appeared that the masses had never really internalized their revolutionary strategies.

Lenin, of course, sought to reunite Marxian theory and practice in the Soviet state, but after his death Stalin created a totalitarian monolith which was hostile to any kind of critical thought, Marxism above all. The scholar-politicals, like Riazanov, were purged, and a new generation of apologists emerged to footnote every twist and turn in the party line with a proper citation from Marxist holy writ. So it is that, since World War I, serious Marxist thought has been the work of people on the intellectual margin of society, often exiled from their homelands as well as from the mass movement. One thinks of the Frankfurt school (Adorno, Horkheimer, Fromm, Marcuse and, more recently, Habermas), of Lucien Goldmann, Max Schachtman, Isaac Deutscher, Hendryk Grossmann, Karl Korsch and a few others. The Austro-Marxists, who did serious political-intellectual work until the *Anschluss*, are the main exception to this sad rule.

In his *Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci, who was protected from the intellectual ravages of Stalinism by Mussolini's prison, was one of the few Marxists to face up to this embarrassing situation. The masses, he wrote, were really not ready for the subtleties of dialectical analysis. What attracted them to Marxism was the "aroma" of inevitable victory which it gave to their struggles. Such a candid and realistic assessment is light years removed from the attitudes to be found in Georg Lukacs' *History and Class Consciousness.*

Lukacs, who died recently, is one of the most fascinating figures in the history of Marxism. Born in 1885, the son of the director of the Kreditanstalt, then the largest bank in Hungary, he studied in Berlin and Heidelberg, impressing his teachers, Simmel and Max Weber, with his enormous talent. A product of that extraordinarily rich—and bourgeois—Middle European culture, he was jolted toward Marxism by World War I and he participated in the Hungarian Soviet Republic. In 1923, as a devoted Communist, he published *History and Class Consciousness,* which was quickly denounced by Lenin and the Communist International. At that point he clearly made a personal decision to stay within the Communist movement, no matter what the spiritual and intellectual cost, and he spent the rest of his life—apart from his activity in the Nagy government during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956—smuggling the contraband of his genius past the party censors. He also managed to stay alive.

History and Class Consciousness begins with an essay, "What is Orthodox Marxism?," which would give any cultural commissar apoplexy. "Let us assume for the sake of argument," Lukacs wrote, "that recent research had disproved once and for all every one of Marx's individual theses. Even if this were to be proved, every serious 'orthodox' Marxist would still be able to accept all such modern findings without reservation and hence dismiss all of Marx's theses *in toto*—without having to renounce his orthodoxy for a single moment." That free-thinking spirit was obviously anathema to the totalitarian catechists of Stalinism, which was why Lukacs had to hide it.

The most valuable—and densely packed, difficult—sections of *History and Class Consciousness* are to be found in two chapters, "Class Consciousness" and "Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat." Let me attempt the impossible, a brief and critical summary of these labyrinthine analyses.

Capitalist society, Lukacs writes (and his emphasis derives from Weber as well as Marx), is plagued by a crucial contradiction which affects all of its intellectual life. On the one hand, every department of the economy is systematically and progressively rationalized; on the other hand, the overall functioning of the economy is explained in the essentially mystical terms of Adam Smith's invisible hand and is subject to periodic and inexplicable crises (inexplicable from the point of view of the best of all possible systems). This duality, he continues, can be clearly seen in bourgeois economics which, however ingenious and even profound its contributions may be, cannot face up to the real source of crisis: that capitalism is a transitory system whose contradictions prepare the way for its own destruction.

Thus far I think Lukacs is quite right. It is one of the most extraordinary facts of Western intellectual history that for a century or so mainstream economists regarded depressions as aberrations from a providential equilibrium (one theory even related them to the periodicity of sun spots). And it is certainly true that even a giant like Marshall did not notice these cataclysms in his analysis because he was committed to optimistic and unwitting assumptions about the society. But then Lukacs takes this point and pushes on, from economics into philosophy itself.

The great problem of philosophy in the capitalist era, he holds, is the same lack of any sense of totality which afflicts the economist. In Kant, a towering figure of bourgeois thought, this is quite explicit. Science and industry are given credit for their enormous practical achievements, which allow their "truth" to be corroborated empirically. But metaphysics is now lost and bewildered in the midst of an increasingly rationalized world. The "thing in itself," the ultimate constituent of reality, becomes unknowable. One is conscious of the forms of knowledge through which we make sense out of external data, but there is no guarantee that they are themselves objective. So philosophy is wracked by insoluble dualities: subjec-

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tivity and objectivity, form and content, body and soul, and so on.

This metaphysical dead end, Lukacs continues, is related to the consciousness of people in society. The alienation of the capitalist can be discovered beneath the appearances of power. The more brilliantly he analyzes the "laws" of the market—the more ingeniously the Wall Street tipster of today charts the rise and fall of stock prices—the more impotent he proves himself to be. For he is only a powerless spectator trying to anticipate what those mysterious economic forces, the real creators, are going to do. The worker's alienation is more straightforward. His subjectivity, his personal humanity, is objectified in an impersonal work process which makes him but a cog in a machine. Everyday social life, for both the bourgeois and the proletariat, is, like Kant's metaphysics, plagued by the opposition of subject and object.

How resolve these antinomies of bourgeois thought? Hegel, Lukacs says, took a giant step in the right direction. The objective world, he said (and the insight only became available when capitalism began to transform reality), is created by man's subjectivity. Therefore it is wrong to counterpose subject and object; they are really the aspects of a single, historical and interpenetrating process. We can understand the world because we made it—its logic is our logic and vice versa. But Hegel, Lukacs holds, could only solve the problem in his head, since he had no program to transform that rationally irrational society which gave rise to the dualisms of bourgeois life and philosophy.

Enter the proletariat. Its class position, Lukacs asserts, not only permits it but also requires it to look at capitalism as a historic totality in which crisis is a structural feature. Even more to the point, the workers are driven by the conditions of their existence to struggle against that planlessness which the bourgeois economists celebrate as the society's greatest virtue. Thus the proletariat ceases to be the object, the plaything, of history and becomes a subject, an actor, with a class interest in objectivity. It is forced to a vision of the whole.

The language in which Lukacs makes his case is not easily available even to a well-educated contemporary American. Yet that should not keep the diligent reader from the considerable truth to be found in this book. The contradiction between rationality in detail and irrationality in totality is with us to this day: we may yet choke ourselves to death with enormous ingenuity; we might, by investing billions of dollars in the fossil fuel industry, change the temperature of the earth and "accidentally" flood some of our cities. And there is no question that this peculiar social background had a profound effect upon the social sciences and even upon metaphysics.

But Lukacs, if I can turn his paradox against him, is marvelous only in analyzing the various aspects of this process, and most particularly in his account of Kant and Hegel. It is just his sense of totality which turns out to be wrong.

For Lukacs, "class consciousness is identical with neither the psychological consciousness of individual members of the proletariat, nor with the (mass-psychological) consciousness of the proletariat as a whole; but it is, on the

Poems by Michael Casey

THE LZ GATOR BODY COLLECTOR

See
Her back was arched
Like something was under it
That's why I thought
It was booby trapped
But it's not
It just must have been
Over this rock here
And somebody must
Have moved it
After corpus morta stiffened it
I didn't know it was
A woman at first
I couldn't tell
But then I grabbed
Down there
It's a woman or was
It's all right
I didn't mind
I had gloves on then

HOA BINH

August thirty-first
Stanley was all excited
She just made eighteen
And got to vote
For the first time
There were sixteen slates
To vote for
In Vietnam that year
And every slate's poster
Said that
That slate
Wanted Hoa Binh
From voting
She came back to me
All excited
Casee
I vote for Hoa Binh

That's nice, Stanley
I did too
Back in Hoa Ky
I hope your vote counts

FREE LOVE

There the love is free
Go to Thailand
Tokyo and Sydney
'd be bad for you there
Man there are whores
Everywhere
But a neon city whore
Costs more than more money
In Thailand you
Can get a whore
Costing money
Without it costing your soul
The girl will love you there
And it's nice
My girl cried when I left her

BAGLEY

I was talking
To one of the
Chu Lai pigs
At the gate there
An he said
Some of the
Bayonet pigs
Caught him
In a skivvy girl house
Last night
An he accused
One of us
Of pointing
A weapon at him
I asked him
What did the dude look like
An he said
I don't know
Sort of big
Sort of doofus looking
An I knew right away
It was you, Casey

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contrary, *the sense, become conscious, of the historical role of the class.*" Hegel, having been ushered out the front door, sneaks in through the kitchen. The class consciousness of the workers can exist utterly apart from the workers. It is an idea, not a reality. And this definition has fateful political consequences, for it allows Lukacs to say that the Communist Party is the "organised form" of proletarian self-consciousness—whatever the actual, breathing proletariat may think.

Once such a mystical identification is made, then subservience to Stalin, the leader of the Communist Party, is, by definition, loyalty to the working class even if at the moment Stalin happens to be beating the daylights out of the workers. Moreover, one is then freed from the onerous duty of discovering, in Marxian terms, the reason for the empirically observed absence of a revolutionary consciousness on the part of most workers in the advanced countries. (The decline in that sentiment, if I may compress an enormously complex subject into a phrase, has resulted from the very considerable change in the social existence of the workers and in the kind of work which they perform.) But if Lukacs fails in his own high ambition to understand the present "as history," he, like Kant, develops brilliant insights as he presents his flawed description of totality.

Jacques Ellul's book is much more accessible than Lukacs' and much less rewarding. One of its central themes is a sharp polemic against Marx as a sort of technocrat of the revolution who has no sense of spontaneous process. Such an image may be relevant to the Marx of French communism—say to Althusser's sophisticated and learned presentation of a scientistic, vulgar Marx—but it has little to do with the historical Marx. That, it might be argued, is a scholarly matter which can properly be assigned to Marxologues. The only problem is that Ellul's reading of radical history profoundly affects his vision of the present and future.

For in rejecting the pseudo-Marx, the superplanner and centralizer, Ellul not only simplifies his opponent's position but his own as well. He counterposes his program to that of his imagined, and nonexistent, Marx: "A revolution against the technological society (not against technology) implies decreased efficiency in all areas (total yield, productivity, adaptiveness, integration), a lowered standard of living, the reduction of large-scale public programs, and the erosion of mass culture."

If one were to follow this approach it would be impossible—to take but a single instance—to provide decent housing for the poor in the United States (that will take planned federal action on the grand scale, including the building of new cities from the ground up). It would be even worse for the Third World which, if the advanced economies were to take Ellul's tack, could never hope to get the material and human aid which would enable it to overcome its poverty. That the present uses of technology are often counterproductive goes without saying. But the proper deduction from the fact is not to oppose "efficiency" but rather the anti-social measure of efficiency which totally ignores social cost. I would argue instead that if we concentrated on raising the living standards of the majority of the world we would necessarily be making a much more benign use of technology than we are making now.

These present and future concerns bear very much on the nonhistorical Marx who is Ellul's foil. In reality, Marx synthesized Saint-Simon and Fourier, centralist and decentralist radicalism, understanding that the conquest and organization of power at the center was—it still is—the precondition for creating a context in which decentralized community rule might flourish. Indeed, throughout his life Marx always spoke of the cells of the future society as "associations," i.e., he used the key word of French anarchism to describe his own hopes.

These two books, then, have contrasting deficiencies. In Lukacs, for all the subtlety of his categories, there is too much of the messianic intellectualism, the certainty about "totality," which has often afflicted Marxism. In Ellul there is too little sense of history and a mechanistic counterposing of centralism and decentralism which ignores Marx's sense of a historic process in which such contraries mingle with each other. But the Lukacs volume, so much more difficult than Ellul's, contains rewarding and exciting insights for any student of philosophy and Marxism. It lacks only that vibrant sense of the living whole which it declares to be the *sine qua non* of intellectual analysis. For in it the proletariat becomes an abstraction. □

Poets in Varying Degrees

THE YELLOW ROOM. *By Donald Hall. Harper & Row, Publishers. 74 pp. $4.95.*

BROKEN LAWS. *By Daniel Hoffman. Oxford University Press. 68 pp. $4.95. Paper $1.95.*

THE ONLY WORLD THERE IS. *By Miller Williams. E. P. Dutton & Co. 77 pp. $4.95. Paper $2.45.*

ROBERT STOCK
Mr. Stock is the author of a book of poems, Covenants *(Trident), and is now living in Costa Rica.*

I wish I could call Donald Hall's new book blinding in its intensity and insight; I wish I could call it moving or even interesting; and, on the other hand, I wish I could say that his work has run downhill since he abandoned "Neo-Augustinism" for whatever he is up to now. Alas, Mr. Hall has perhaps improved; alas, he has not improved enough to matter. *The Yellow Room* is in the tradition of a series of poems charting the seas (usually rough) of a love affair (usually illicit). Perhaps we think of the Roman elegiac poets or the Renaissance sonnet sequences, or John Berryman's recent revival of the tradition in his own sonnet sequence, followed by Shapiro's *The White-Haired Lover*. But in Donald Hall's collection, the focus slips. The object of the poet's attention is no longer the beloved, nor is it the affair (a skimpy one as presented), nor is it even the lover, who is as a man a sentimental solipsist and, as a poet, a chameleon gone mad on scraps of plaid. Indeed, his whole iconography is out of focus. Take his imagery of rooms, for example, an obsession since his first book. A habitual mode of Hall's is the symbol of outer and inner rooms. "New Room," in the present book, attempts this movement; but the transitions, like the separate poems in the book, run into one another like Silly Putty, losing all sense of rooms. Another instance of slipped focus occurs in "The Snail," where the shell, obviously a room, becomes an inappropriate planet. The same kind of blurring characterizes his use of the color, yellow. Although he employs it thematically, as a sensory datum it is merely histrionic and, as a symbol, crudely approximate. It is advertising yellow. Indeed, the book is self-advertising. Consider the following sentimental poem (cited in its entirety):

Chairs next to each other,
I watch you, out of my tears,
smiling at the corners of your mouth
as the words reach me.

Self-pity and sentimentality don't wait

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long before biting back, and here's the very next poem (also in its entirety):

You hate animals
that kill birds.
I see you under low leaves,
eyes fixed.
Claws extend in shadow.

In one poem only, the Rexrothian "Wood Smoke," Mr. Hall rises above mere talent, and almost combines skill and passion.

Daniel Hoffman's fifth volume of verse is divided into three sections. The first consists of the single ambitious poem in eleven parts that gives the book its title. The parts cohere only loosely, yet the poem is a considerable one and repays close reading. Hoffman is good enough for his partial failures to be instructive. Because the jacket copy is misleading, I would like to describe the contents of this poem in detail. The first part succeeds in presenting the sense we have of imminence and right instinct in nature, and the second contrasts this with the ruin of man's artifacts. But these grave matters lose their high seriousness when the "I" enters at part three. The individuation and unspoken mission of the I is minified by a flippant pun: ". . . the day/That lets us in/On . . . ." This is followed by further individuation of the nonhuman, with the I as arbiter of identity, intention and purpose. In part five, the precedence of immediate need over cosmic questions is affirmed in terms of the remote and the near, the inanimate and the animate, putting parts two and three in doubt. Part six, an example of the human will to survive, follows naturally enough from five, and part seven fuses the sense of mission from three and the will from six in a putative knowledge which is carried uninterrupted into eight's rejection of the desireless, eternal moment. Part nine is a vigorous but unnecessary celebration of the social instinct. The cosmic considerations that were rejected in part eight are again broached and partially affirmed in part ten, while the last section once more rejects the stars and reaffirms the laws of nature, which had been broken like the tablets of Genesis.

The parts of this poem hop back and forth like a wounded animal. Here, as in many of the poems of the later sections, Hoffman struggles with his refusal of reasonableness and form. It does not come lightly with him, as it does with Hall, nor with the brio of the young who have not yet given the matter much thought. Hoffman strives, brings abundant reason to his unreasonableness. It is my opinion that the revolt against reason, found in each of these three poets, is no more productive than is the isolating apotheosis of reason. There is a right relation of feeling to reason, and only through that relation can men find their right relation to themselves, to others, and to the only world they have. "Identity Papers," the second section of the book, contains much of Hoffman's best verse since "An Armada of Thirty Whales." What he has learned from Edwin Muir, the great and underestimated Scottish poet, is evident here in his grasp of archetypal experience, its mysteries and terrors. I would recommend "Aphrodite," "First Sight," the chilling "A Trip," "In Memory of Lewis Corey," "A Natural Philosopher," "A Historian," "A Marked Man," "A Breach and Entry," "An Assassin" (which reveals how, in a world in which the laws are broken as irrevocably as in Hoffman's—our world, after all—the distinction between victim and victimizer, hunted and hunter, cannot be maintained, and the contemporary canard about law and order is exposed as the contemptible thing it is), and, finally, "A Casualty," the ultimate victimization.

The last section is a grab bag of impressionistic pieces on snow, silence and music, all slight, with the appearance of trial flights, but with the promise of a lyrical strain new in his work. One, "I Am the Sun," is breathtaking, complete; it ravishes in the way Elizabethan lyrics do.

For those who caught a touch of spring fever from Miller Williams' first book, *So Long at the Fair,* his new collection, *The Only World There Is,* will yield a nourishing summer harvest. If Hall has eked out a book from various oddments, Williams gives the impression that his book has the customary 70-some pages only because his publisher insisted on that many. I would especially recommend "Net," "Side Show," "La Ultima Carta" (although with reservations), "It Is Not That It Came to Nothing Emiliano" (perfect of its kind), "July 20, 1969," "In Commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the Ed Sullivan Show and Every Anniversary Following," "How the Elephant Got His Hump," and "At the End of My Thirty-Ninth Year." Even the social or political poems that few poets can help writing nowadays, find the right relation between the particular and the universal. Rather than elevation, workmanship and opulence, Williams excels in vigorous execution and a force that is both spare and sparing. The contemporary cliché has a way of flowering with Williams; he forces something arresting from the stock response. Much of his

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imagery is potentially metaphysical, but he is apt to let fancy spoil the results, whereupon we get something not as serious as wit and not as funny as humor. However much I admire "La Ultima Carta," I am put off because of the prolixity of its conversational style; in the same poem, the tone does not tell us how the young wife means her final statement. Very occasionally a passage, and in the case of "To Understand" a whole poem, suffers from nonfunctional ambiguity of syntax (sounds like a disease) that could be cleared up by punctuation. On the whole, however, Miller Williams is among the best American poets under 50. When he calls down the muses, they stand around awhile. And from the horripilant, disgusting, tastelessly human "Side Show" to the tender profundity of "It Is Not That It Came to Nothing Emiliano," the range is tremendous. □

The Author of 'Gogol's Wife'

CANCERQUEEN AND OTHER STORIES. *By Tommaso Landolfi. Translated by Raymond Rosenthal. The Dial Press. 276 pp. $7.95.*

RONALD DE FEO

Mr. De Feo's short stories have appeared in the Transatlantic, Massachusetts, North American *and* Roanoke Reviews.

The characters in these stories are, for the most part, restless, obsessed beings, compelled to possess and to destroy, plagued by fantasy, curiosity and conscience. They can't seem to find peace. Their everyday lives are vague. We know little about how they exist, where they reside, what they did before they imprisoned themselves—for their obsessions have reduced their worlds, narrowed their emotional and intellectual range. They are not hysterically insane, but rather quietly, subtly mad.

Landolfi's work is like Poe's in its stifling intensity and perversity. The reader is not kept at a safe distance from the maniacal protagonist but is thrust into his limited world, made to share and understand—even condone—his particular obsession, however repulsive. In "The Mute" we enter the mind of a man who has murdered a 15-year-old mute girl. While he waits in his cell for his executioners, the murderer tries to convince himself that he is innocent of the crime—innocent in the sense that he really had no choice but to kill. The girl's handicap, he explains, made her more desirable, for as a mute she seemed more helpless, childlike and innocent. The trouble was that she became for him *too* innocent. He could not bring himself to possess her in a natural way. She deserved something better. He slashed her to death. While all of this may not sound logical in synopsis, it does make a kind of sense in the story itself. Landolfi almost convinces the reader—as the narrator almost convinces himself—that the murder was a necessary act, the only means of relieving a tortured mind. Like Poe, Landolfi builds up so much frustration and tension that the reader begins to weaken under the strain and finds himself cheering on the madman, saying, Yes, go ahead, kill her, get it over with.

Murder in this case and in other violent Landolfi stories ("Gogol's Wife," published in English in an earlier collection, comes to mind especially) is an insanely logical final step, relieving both narrator and reader. At times, however, murder is the first step, altering a character and his world. In "Hands," we have a kind of minor murder. Federico, who lives alone in a large deserted house, is determined to kill a mouse he has discovered in the storage room. He and his old hunting dog vigorously pursue the elusive and seemingly indestructible creature. Only after an unnaturally frantic and violent struggle do they succeed in killing it. At first Federico is relieved, but soon the act begins to trouble him. The murder is described in great detail. In fact, it takes up a good part of the story. Landolfi magnifies it for a number of reasons. He is saying that no death or act of violence is really inconsequential. He wishes to shake us and have the crime haunt us as it will haunt Federico. This can best be accomplished through meticulous, memorable and rather disgusting detail:

> . . . Federico noticed that the mouse, in his attempts at flight, was dragging behind him a longish, dully glistening string which now wrapped itself around his body, now slithered, fully extended, through the dust on the ground, so that it must have quickly lost whatever sheen it originally had. Bending down to see in the weak light of the moon, he discovered it to be a gut and was astonished by its thinness and length . . . it was in fact a strip of gut, by now grimy and unrecognizable, which refused to detach itself from the animal and issued from it like an umbilical cord. . . .

The accumulation of such absurd, loving description also produces another response in the reader—he tends to smile at it all. For Landolfi, who is an extremely subtle and witty artist, seems to be mocking the very genre in which he is working, the blood-curdling horror tale which Poe approached with so much seriousness. In any case, Federico cannot forget the horrible act. It remains vivid and alive in his mind. Although Landolfi tells us next to nothing about him, he does hint that the man has lived vicariously, through books. But now a touch of reality has shaken his world; the happenings recorded in his books do not measure up to his single, unforgettable experience. He becomes, Landolfi tells us, with no explanation, one of the best lawyers in the region. Perhaps Federico has grown more human. Perhaps he has grown slightly crazy too. Even as an old man, at night he searches his home for mice, calling to them, hoping to comfort them.

Some of Landolfi's characters are writers, like the Stefano of "Stefano's Two Sons," whose fictional son becomes more important to him than the child of his body. Other characters could very well be writers, given their imagination and curiosity, and the ability to record their experiences and transform them into art. The narrator of "Cancerqueen" is an unsuccessful gambler who accompanies a mad inventor on a journey to the moon. The trip is described vividly and at length, but the reader simply cannot accept the account as fact, cannot take the narrator seriously. The reader begins to suspect that the narrator has, in fact, created a work of fiction in order to relieve his troubled mind. We know that he has murdered a man. But has he murdered the mad inventor, as he claims in his journal, or is the victim someone else, someone we do not know? The narrator says that he is lost in space, with the moon above him and the earth below. Is this state symbolic of his detachment? The inventor's corpse drifts outside the spacecraft following it, haunting it. Does the image represent a haunted conscience? "Cancerqueen" is a puzzling, ambitious story

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that invites the reader to speculate. It may simply be a parody of the science fiction tale, but with a writer as clever as Landolfi, one suspects that there is much more to it.

Throughout this collection we are in the presence of an erudite and original writer, an artist who is in full control of his material. The stories are superbly constructed. I've mentioned Poe in connection with Landolfi, but while both writers are wildly imaginative, Landolfi sees the comedy in the terrifying situations he creates and we laugh with him, not at him (as often happens with Poe when he is purple or plain silly). He writes beautifully (and Raymond Rosenthal cannot be praised too highly for his excellent translation). From "Hands" a description of the aftermath of the mouse murder:

> Dawn was rising over the mouse's small corpse; his protruding eyes, by now curdled, vaguely reflected its light; a great many industrious ants bustled all around him like diligent clerks, still sleepy and puffy-eyed, whom one might meet along the city's streets on winter mornings. The acacia trees in the courtyard were trying to clear their throats for the start of the day. The piece of gut that had broken off lay a little to one side and already half withered. The dog huddled in a ditch, shivering in the first gust of wind.

The previous Landolfi volume, *Gogol's Wife and Other Stories*, was only a teaser compared to the present book. Landolfi surely is one of the great modern Italian writers, along with Svevo and Gadda, and a major figure in contemporary fiction. *Cancerqueen* is brilliant, different and refreshing without being self-consciously "experimental." We are drawn back to all superior works of art. I have already returned to *Cancerqueen*. □

And Now, Inner Space Fiction

BRIEFING FOR A DESCENT INTO HELL. *By Doris Lessing. Alfred A. Knopf. 308 pp. $6.95.*

ROBIN MacNAUGHTON
Miss MacNaughton is a writer who works for a New York advertising firm.

The boundary between the sane and the insane is a classic subject for artistic comment and questioning. In Kurt Vonnegut's *God Bless You Mr. Rosewater*, Eliot Rosewater's analyst emphatically announces, "Here is a very sick man." However, as the novel's plot unravels in Vonnegut's irreverent manner, what we actually see is altruism labeled madness.

In her most recent novel Doris Lessing takes a similar theme and places it in a new structure which she calls "inner space fiction," a journey into the mind of a man. Found wandering in a state of amnesia near the Embankment in London, Charles Watkins, professor of classics at Cambridge, reluctantly surrenders himself to the order of science as a mental patient at the Central Intake Hospital. Pressed by psychiatrists to respond with a name and a past, with the rapidity of a flash of sound married to an image, he is in effect condemned to silence. That, in turn, earns him an increased dosage of incapacitating drugs.

Charles Watkins is a secular Christ with apocalyptic visions. His suffering is born of his sensitivity. Drifting in his own racked mind, he participates in bloody rituals, the savage wars of the Swiftian rat dogs and lofty bird flights over the sea of the dead. Clinging to a raft, or sinking into an ocean of blanched bed sheets, Charles Watkins is a grim metaphor of the lonely human condition.

Is his insanity an objective reality or merely a social construct? Miss Lessing's choice is made to appear painfully obvious because of a style that too often shows the strain of trying to be convincing. Charles Watkins' predicament is both metaphysical and literal. Centuries earlier, he was vouchsafed a vision and assigned a mission—no less than that of redeeming mankind. Yet, one of his most painful trials is that his new birth "is but a sleep and a forgetting." His origins and quasi-divine sanction appear to him as vague as clouded thought, but his suffering is real as a hypodermic needle or an electrode. In respect to social norms, he is abnormal; since this is a serious handicap on the temporal plane, he is forced to conform to an obedient stereotype. Life for him is something more than a sleep—it is also a hell. That is the center of Miss Lessing's bleak philosophy.

Her sensitivity to the universal character of Charles Watkins' plight proves to be a literary pitfall. In her conscientious attempt to extract coherent insights from a chaotic flow of incidents and images, she is hampered by her very intensity. Her vision is undisciplined to the point that it often loses itself in repetition. Out of empathy, she permits herself very little of what is rightly regarded as artistic detachment. The mood of her narrative is dark and hopeless. The stream of images is grim, rapid, relentless. Miss Lessing works furiously at establishing her personal viewpoint, and in the process exhausts the reader. Accordingly, *Briefing for a Descent into Hell* is alternately brilliant and boring.

The journey through Charles Watkins' mind is a journey through horror and despair. Civilization is wildly uncivilized, society dangerously insane. However, this spectacle of violence and irrationality leaves the reader curiously unmoved. Intellectually one accepts the chaos, emptiness, fear, loneliness and frustration. Yet it is difficult to accept emotionally the special pain of Watkins' extraordinary sensitivity. If empathy is not an important aim of this kind of writing, what is the literary force of "inner space fiction"?

Writers since Joyce have often employed unconventional style and structure—indeed, that is a hallmark of modernism in literature. Nevertheless, Miss Lessing goes to the trouble of naming her atypical mode of writing as

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if the term were destined to become part of the critical vocabulary. Of course the test of any literary innovation, and the justification for a new coinage to represent it, is whether the author's language and images evoke an inner sense of man, a sensual and emotional taste of experience which is not at all forced but flowing, gentle and natural.

Briefing for a Descent into Hell is more a personal Bible than a piece of acceptable fiction. After reading Miss Lessing's Afterword, in which she reveals her preoccupation with the dilemma of the sensitive mind, that fact is easy to understand but just as easy to resent. Even the reader who accepts her view of life is likely to prefer drawing his own conclusions from a work of art. In Miss Lessing's new novel, the reader has no such privilege, for she is more concerned to have him assent to a painful vision than to create an artistic truth that carries its own warrant of conviction. □

Book Marks

CAREY McWILLIAMS

THE RIGHTS WE HAVE: A Handbook of Civil Liberties. *By Osmond K. Fraenkel. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 246 pp. $5.95.*

Just what it purports to be: a comprehensive statement of the rights assured to citizens. Mr. Fraenkel is the lawyer's civil liberties lawyer. He was a great civil liberties attorney long before we had developed a fondness for the breed and they came to enjoy their present vogue. During the most critical period of the cold-war domestic witch hunt, Mr. Fraenkel stood his ground with admirable poise and fortitude, refusing to pay tribute to the fashionable "anti-communism" of the period, and enduring with grace and patience the follies of his left-wing colleagues. The book would have benefited by a lengthy introduction about the character, learning, skill, and quiet achievements of this great lawyer.

ON MY WAY TO THE THEATER. *By Hy Kraft. The Macmillan Co. 210 pp. $6.95.*

Interspersed in Hy Kraft's account of his career in the theatre and in motion pictures are interesting chapters on Theodore Dreiser and Sinclair Lewis. But the book's chief value consists in the author's account of the witch hunt conducted by the House Committee on Un-American Activities in the entertainment world. There are interesting insights into such matters, for example, as the formation of the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League. These sections contain a painful account of the experience of being blacklisted and some revealing notes on the behavior of so-called "friendly" witnesses. On this score Kraft quotes Ben Hecht to good effect: "If a fellow is so afraid of getting kicked off a radio program or out of a Hollywood job that he must start drooling mea culpas, he seems to me as much an American turncoat as does Joe McCarthy." A depressing story but well worth reading—and remembering.

MONGOLIA. *By Albert Axelbank. Kodansha International. 138 pp. Paper $1.95.*

An excellent introduction to Mongolia by a journalist who knows it well. The author is a frequent *Nation* contributor. The volume contains a good map, fine color photographs, and a useful chronology and reading list.

NEW GODS IN AMERICA: An Informal Investigation into the New Religions of American Youth Today. *By Peter Rowley. David McKay Co. 204 pp. $5.95.*

A readable journalistic account of some of today's bizarre cults, from the strange visions and revelations of Edgar Cayce to Scientology and the Process Church of the Final Knowledge. The author has contributed articles and reviews to *The Nation.*

THE BONDS: An American Family. *By Roger M. Williams. Atheneum Publishers. 301 pp. $10.*

A fine study of an intensely interesting American Negro family: "Aunt Jane" Bond, James Bond, Horace Mann Bond, and Julian Bond. A well-constructed narrative, covering 130 years, rich in social and political insights. The author is a *Nation* contributor.

BEYOND REPAIR: The Ecology of Capitalism. *By Barry Weisberg. Beacon Press. 201 pp. $6.95.*

An attempt to document the structural impossibility of curtailing the pace of ecological and social destruction within the framework of the present economic and political system. The author is co-director of the Bay Area Institute in San Francisco and the editor of *Ecocide in Indochina.* He has contributed to *The Nation.* A companion volume might well be written about how ecological issues have been handled in the Soviet Union, China and the East European countries.

THINK TANKS. *By Paul Dickson. Atheneum Publishers. 369 pp. $10.*

An excellent account of "think tanks," those remarkable idea factories that have come along in the post-World War II period, from RAND to Herman Kahn's Hudson Institute. The best study of the subject that has appeared. The author is a *Nation* contributor.

THE FILM CRITICISM OF OTIS FERGUSON. *Edited by Robert Wilson with a foreword by Andrew Sarris. Temple University Press. 458 pp. $12.50.*

Otis Ferguson's motion picture criticism from *The New Republic* of the period from 1934 through 1941. Ferguson joined the Merchant Marine after Pearl Harbor and was killed when his ship was bombed in the Bay of Salerno. In addition to the preface by Wilson and foreword by Sarris, the volume contains a useful list of the films reviewed and a good index. Of special interest are

SPRING HORSES

They were loose in the near field,
In the first heat of the year.
We were standing by the fence,
When they must have felt the air
Touch something in their deepest blood.
And they broke from their winter spaces,
Broke from stables heavy on their shapes.
We could hardly believe the sound of hoofs
In the sun-flooded mud, or the wild
Unwinding of the shoulders, legs . . .
The day reached further after that
Great heaving. Later, they slowed,
Approached the fence, rubbed against us
Their great heads, their sweating love.

Harry Humes

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Ferguson's impressions of Hollywood, "To the Promissory Land" (pp. 419-458), which he visited in the last six months of 1941. It was my privilege to bring some features of the geographical, social and political landscape to his attention on the occasion of that visit. A valuable view of Hollywood before the advent of television.

HUSTLERS AND HEROES: An American Political Panorama. *By Milton Viorst. Simon & Schuster. 382 pp. $8.95.*

A collection of political portraits by one of the country's most knowledgeable political reporters. Included are portraits of Jacob K. Javits (one of the best), Everett M. Dirksen, Joseph Rauh, Robert C. Byrd ("Hillbilly in the Service of the Lord"), Bobby Baker, Dean Rusk, Richard J. Daley, Robert F. Kennedy, McGeorge Bundy, John N. Mitchell, James Farmer, William O. Douglas and others. The author is a *Nation* contributor.

TWENTY-MINUTE FANDANGOS AND FOREVER CHANGES: A Rock Bazaar. *Edited by Jonathan Eisen. Random House. 270 pp. $7.95. Paper $2.95.*

A collection of articles on rock by the editor of *The Age of Rock* and *The Age of Rock 2*. As the editor says: "You can start anywhere" and indeed you can. Contains some good satire and a fair amount of social criticism. Next time around, there should be more by the editor, who knows the rock scene well.

LOUIS ADAMIC: A Checklist. *By Henry A. Christian. Kent State University Press. 164 pp. $6.50.*

A complete checklist of reviews, articles, books and translations by Louis Adamic, based on meticulous research both in this country and in Yugoslavia. It took a lot of hard digging and interviewing to turn up some of the items included in the checklist. It is as complete as any listing of this kind is ever likely to be and it is presented with consistently scholarly concern for accuracy. Mr. Christian has also contributed a thoughtful, sensitive essay about Adamic and his writings. Publication of the checklist will immeasurably lighten the task of whoever it is that undertakes the full-length study of Adamic that is now long overdue. My nominee for the task would be Henry Christian.

RADICAL LIFESTYLES. *By Claudia Dreifus. Lancer Books. 156 pp. Paper $1.50.*

An examination of the possibility of new "lifestyles" — author's spelling— through a series of portraits of six individuals who have adopted or invented one. The author is a *Nation* contributor. She is married, owns a shaggy dog, Pushkin, votes Democratic under protest, and may not vote at all if things get worse. She has just turned 26 and fears that this may be her last year "to bend with the lifestyles that are America's cultural revolution." She could be right about this, for something very alarming happened recently. She entered a Greenwich Village shop and a well-dressed "kid from a prosperous suburban community tried to panhandle me." To her amazement she found herself screaming at him: "Why don't you go out and get a job!" That's the way it tends to be with radical life styles after 26.

THEATRE

HAROLD CLURMAN

"Hello! I'm laughter—not just any laughter, but the kind that appears when all goes wrong." That is a line from the Mother's soliloquy in Jean Genet's *The Screens* at the Chelsea Theatre Center of Brooklyn.

The Mother's greeting may well be the open sesame to a sense—I do not say "understanding"—of a play which may be set down as a terrible masterpiece. Its running time is four and a half hours, and if you seek strict coherence, you are lost. The scenes are scattered, confused, frightening, absurd and ultimately no more nefarious than a nightmare. The play's very explosion constitutes its meaning. "Everything wicked in the vegetable kingdom," the Mother goes on to say, "was won over to me." That is Genet's insignia, his contribution. If evil and hatred must have a conscious voice in drama, let it be Genet's.

The outraged patrioteers who rioted in Paris at the Roger Blin/Jean-Louis Barrault production of the play several years ago, because it insulted the French Army fighting the Algerian rebellion, were quite mistaken. The French presence in Algeria is not the butt of Genet's venom, nor is French officialdom the object of his mockery and wrath. His real target is civilization itself—all of modern civilization. He despises everything that it has spawned; he is no more pro-Algeria, as a social interpreter might read him, than he is anti-French. His scorn is all-embracing; it aims at universal devastation. The agony within him and the residue of a profoundly Gallic cultural heritage are wrenched from him in immense gusts of grotesque laughter. They echo like reverberations from Rabelais and Rimbaud.

As long ago as 1915 James Huneker wrote, "Foul is fair in art today." If, as some assert, we are entering a new dark age, it will surely produce its saints as well as its victims. Sartre has called Genet a saint. He is a saint who would purge us in a reversed morality which scours our hypocrisy, deceit and violence in an acid bath of loathing. (The play's title is not a reference simply to the screens that are used as "scenery" but to the symbols of the false front behind which we hide our villainies. Evil be thou my saviour is Genet's prescript, an outcry which has in it almost as much mephitic irony as anguish.

The play's "story" is a springboard for an apocalyptic vision which contains the essence of Genet's *esprit,* and makes it more stage poetry than dramatic narrative. The pivotal figures are Saïd, an Algerian youth, and his mother, both at the bottom of the social scale. Saïd is so poor that to earn some money he marries the most hideously ugly girl (her face throughout the play is covered by a hood), a girl whose father pays a pitiful sum to get her off his hands. Saïd mistreats her; for sexual satisfaction he frequents a brothel (a prominent and telltale locale in this play as in *The Balcony*). But Leila, Saïd's abject wife, develops a slavish devotion to him, apparently thriving on his cruelty. She follows him like a whipped dog and joins him in his every misdeed. To

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escape Algeria, where he works as an abused farmhand under international capitalist ownership, he steals and Leila abets him in his thefts. Both are frequently jailed.

Saïd turns traitor to his countrymen. It isn't clear whether he does this because of a desire to escape the misery of his condition as an oppressed worker or because he has become a stooge of Genet's ideological bent: he says, "What can I sell out on, so as to be a complete louse?" When finally he is hunted down and the French authorities want to make a hero of him—with song, decoration and statue to celebrate his betrayal—he refuses the "honor," with his mother's blessings, and allows himself to be shot down. He is an adherent to no political cause, a patriot of no land—in which respects he imitates Genet himself.

In and around this bit of plot is a vast panorama of scenic flashes in which the foreigners' orange groves are burned by the natives, the elegance of French military splendor is burlesqued, together with the stupefying decadence of the *haute bourgeoisie*. Then, too, one glimpses the hilarious unconcern of the afterlife, the demystified exchanges between the living and the dead, and one hears voices from "nowhere." There is always the return of the whores—who know everything, for in their company men reveal their true feelings.

Through all the long parade of vicious insult, scatological rhapsody and infernal scurrility, Genet provides such keynotes as: "I want you to plunge into irrevocable grief. . . . I want you to be without hope. I want you to choose evil. I want you to know only hatred and never love." A local sibyl, now deceased, calls out, "Saïd, Leila, my loved ones. . . . You realized that in evil lay the only life." Then, addressing the others, she asks, "What have you done for evil to prevail?" Then, too, we hear the Cadi confess: "All I brought from life is my trembling. If it's taken away from me, I lose everything."*

All this builds to a strange, often bewildering and always arresting eloquence. Unlike his imitators (how I shun them) Genet, through the world's early rejection of him and through his subsequent suffering, has earned the right to his epic nihilism. He bears his humiliation like a defiant badge. And yet I find his outrage somehow cleansing, almost an alleviation in a world of half measures, cautious distinctions, "reasonable" remedies and timid compromises.

The very vehemence and savagery of Genet's ribald imprecations have something unutterably comic about them. They transform the insane turmoil of modern society, of life itself, into farce. Now everything has been said, every condemnation, every superlative of obloquy has been voiced; now we know how bad, and badly off, we are. We are shamelessly unmasked, but on beholding our shamefulness we can emit a roar of relief that we have been told the worst. Pushed beyond the edge of despair, we may realize all that has been left unsaid, all that is still good in the Gehenna in which we dwell. Genet flagellates himself and us into a new purity through the excess and sullied grandiloquence of his derision.

Only a true poet, a man possessed of verbally imaged artistry, could write such a play as *The Screens*. In one of his earlier pieces, Genet spoke of "a truthful idea born of an artificial show." The use of the screens in the present play to obviate all traces of realism, the instruction he gives for devising weird masks, costumes, sounds, reveal a fabulous theatrical imagination, a joy in the creation of stage hyperbole. And when one acknowledges the joy in spectacle added to the thrills of language—colorful, adventuresome, astonishing and dense in allusion—it can no longer be maintained that the end result or even the purpose of the whole enterprise is to depress or destroy. Genet is one of the few creative dramatists of our epoch. From the holocausts of the day he lights his own flaming torch. It illuminates what we are, what we have wrought, what we must renounce.

Minos Volanakis' direction is admirable in its fidelity to and understanding of the script, its treatment of the actors, its skill in the use of the limited technical resources available at the tiny Chelsea quarters. Speeches and scenes, which in reading one might suppose unplayable, become clear; no intention or nuance of action is left recondite, as literature. Everything is theatrically visualized. Watching the play, I speculated on how much more tricky and costly Tom O'Horgan would have made the production if he had been given the opportunity: there would have been more lavish expenditure with much less point. I also wondered why, if we dare cut Shaw and Shakespeare, Volanakis did not venture to abbreviate Genet. But perhaps without the license of length Genet's play would lose some of its dynamism.

The cast too merits much praise. The list of players who warrant compliment is too long to be included, but some words of special commendation are due Julie Bovasso for her shrewd humor and bite in the acting of the Mother; to Grayson Hall for the acrid clarity of the play's emblematic prostitute Warda, and to Joan Harris as Malika, who second Warda; to Robert Jackson for the tortured fervor of his Saïd; to Martin Garner for the canny and touching skepticism of the Cadi; to the physical and vocal versatility of Barry Bostwick's showoff sergeant; to James Cahill as a Mouth for the dead; to Janet League for the accomplishment of her arduous task as Leila; to John Granger for the pathetic fatuousness of his French lieutenant.

Robert Mitchell has used every possible foot of space and remarkable ingenuity to accommodate the multiple effects called for by the play. Especially gratifying are Willa Kim's costumes, among the best of the season; they speak of something more than the money spent on them. [

*These quotations are from Bernard Frechtman's translation. The Chelsea production credits its director, Minos Volanakis, with the translation it uses.

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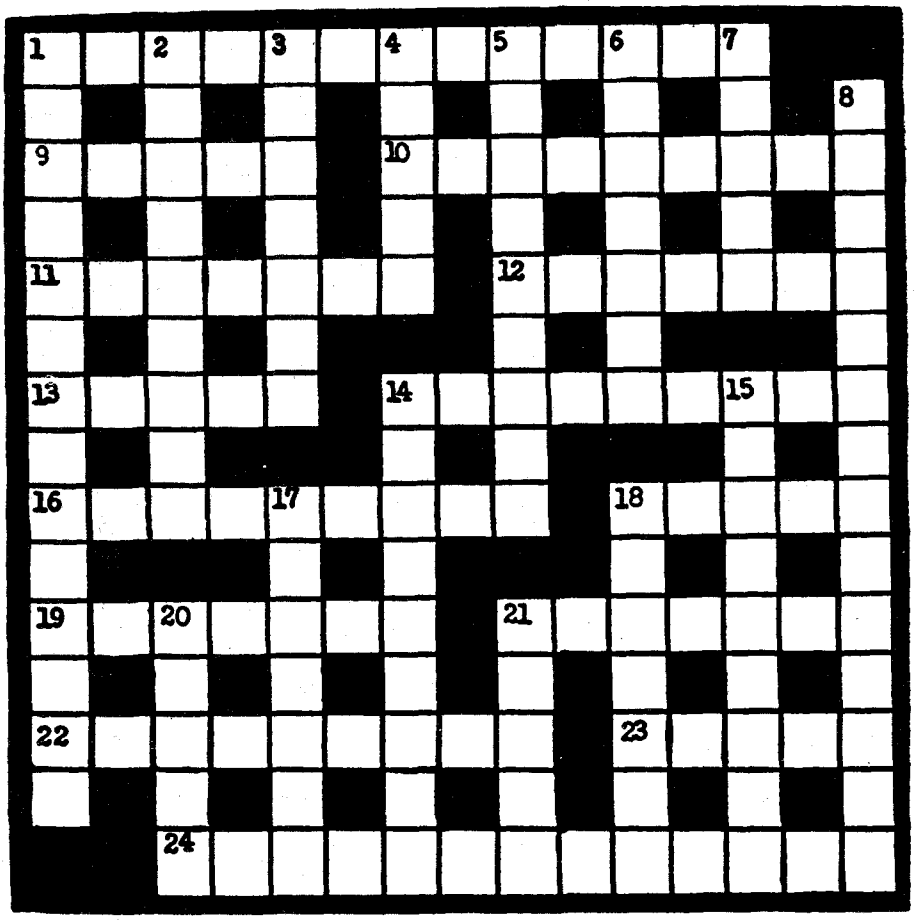

ACROSS

1 Union men had little success with walk-outs here. (13)
9 Openings in the general category, though revolutionary. (5)
10 Homunculus, possibly on the side of 9? (7)
11 Greek character of comic rondeaux. (7)
12 And Roman character of comic reputation. (7)
13 Such as Marian? (5)
14 Not necessarily intended for the rest of the stingers, having belted ten out of it. (6,3)
16 But it may not be the correct act, though your hand could be up for it. (5,4)
18 One of those great things about the area east of the Rockies. (5)
19 Is it a figment of imagination that causes chairmen to miss the final point? (7)
21 Right end and left end, possibly. (7)
22 An American hombre ends up with local water in its capital. (9)
23 Turn over the superior one of 21 across? (2-3)
24 Animal gum mixture, with a glob in the middle? It's in your blood. (5,8)

DOWN

1 Unusual cleaning aromas might be associated with such as the Pilgrims. (5-9)
2 Listing point by point that which may suggest docking. (9)
3 Puts things in order again at summer hotels and the like. (7)
4 Responsible for an early line of Ottomans, the sort that concludes them. (5)
5 Played by the majority of Frenchmen? (5-2-2)
6 Exact version of "all rite"? (7)
7 The Spanish-English individual noted as a violinist. (5)
8 Sublime equivalent of a famous avenue? (5-3-6)
14 It may be painful, but that's a different rule again! (9)
15 A model of excellence, which may have been what the old-fashioned girl was looking for. (4,5)
17 The more confused, the more likely to be a proposition. (17)
18 Disquiet. (7)
20 In short, no one should know you this way. (5)
21 One of those long-winding things? (5)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1421

ACROSS: 1 Fiestas; 9 and 10 Night blindness; 11 Canal Zone; 12 Easel; 15 Saddles; 17 Ensigns; 19 Relicts; 21 and 5 across Latin Quarter; 23 Vestibule; 25 Portended; 27 Embassy; 28 Emended. DOWN: 1 Finecut; 2 Engenders; 3 and 17 down Total eclipse; 4 Subsoil; 5 Quivers; 6 and 26 across Andrea del Sarto; 7 Teens; 8 Rustles; 14 Engineers; 16 Lacquered; 18 and 13 Saved by the bell; 19 Residue; 29 Steroid; 22 Throb; 24 Issue.

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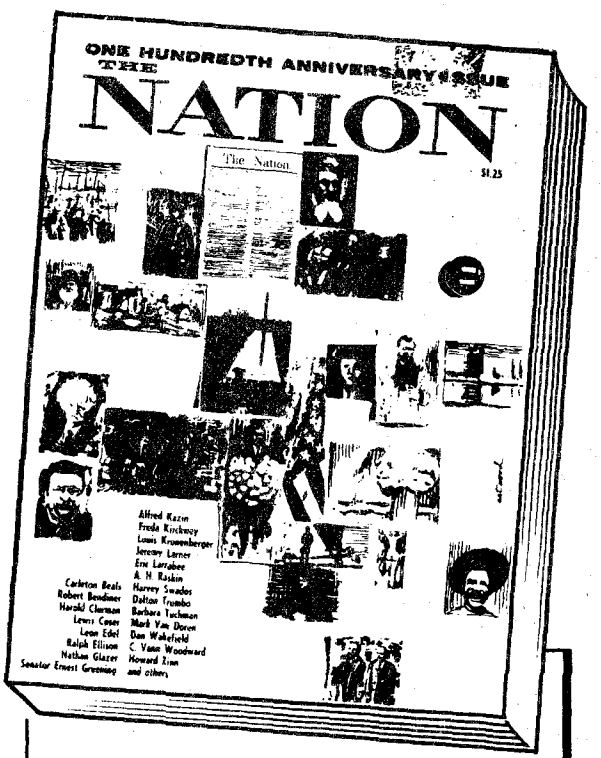

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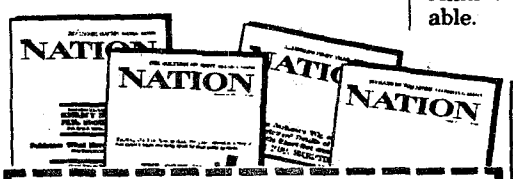

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